



Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir

Musical Director and Conductor

Description of Role

The Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir:

Details of the history, previous repertoire, joining arrangements and other details can be found elsewhere on the choir's website, www.yorkshirephilharmonicchoir.co.uk, so only the following directly relevant points are included here:

1. The Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir (YPC) is an amateur choir but seeks professional standards in everything it does.
2. The YPC is an auditioned SATB choir with three yearly individual vocal reassessments.
3. It performs 4 concerts annually: late Autumn – November; December – Christmas; Spring – March; Summer - June.
4. The choir's main performance venue is Wakefield Cathedral but on occasion it seeks to perform elsewhere in the county.
5. During the season (September to June), weekly rehearsals take place on Tuesday Evenings between 7.30pm and 9.30 pm in the main hall of Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield.
6. In concert, depending on the work or works, performances are accompanied by a professional orchestra (The Amici), other instrumental ensembles and organ.
7. Professional soloists are engaged where scoring dictates.
8. These resources are brought together in the afternoon rehearsal on the day of each concert.
9. The YPC is a welcoming group and regularly holds open rehearsals but also welcomes would-be members at any time. Social and fundraising activities take place within some rehearsals and at other times. Participation is encouraged to build social cohesion and friendship within the choir.

10. The choir is practically supported by its Patrons. One of the benefits of becoming a YPC Patron is to be invited to attend a rehearsal once or twice a year.
11. Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir Ltd. is a charity and company limited by guarantee. There are up to 7 Directors assisted by a further number of choir officers and elected members to form the Choir Committee who are responsible for all aspects of running the choir. At the AGM voting takes place with regard to some of these positions.

Personal Specification

Ideally, someone who:

- Is an experienced and accomplished choral director and conductor, with proven success directing other choirs of similar standard;
- Is a vocal coach and can teach and demonstrate vocal technique in an accessible and approachable way within a group rehearsal;
- Is enthusiastic, committed and inspiring;
- Is friendly, has a sense of humour and will get involved in choir activities;
- Can work with others individually, in groups, committee and other forums;
- Is a good communicator;
- Is well organised and able to meet deadlines;
- Is capable of working with an accompanist and on occasion lead a rehearsal from the piano in the absence of an accompanist;
- Is experienced in directing accompanying professional musicians in orchestras and other ensembles;
- Has good knowledge of choral music and be able to suggest and contact appropriate soloists for future performances;
- Has a breadth of knowledge of choral repertoire both established works and new and contemporary works;
- Is aware of the financial pressures that inevitably govern the running of an organisation such as the YPC and the promotion of choral concerts;
- Can apply that awareness in planning well balanced and economical concerts and in planning concert seasons up to 5 years in advance.

Key Responsibilities

- To lead weekly choir rehearsals and other rehearsals prior to concerts as may be determined, so preparing the YPC to the highest standard ready for each planned concert and event;
- To conduct all YPC concerts in the agreed programme;
- To advise the Directors and Choir Committee on the YPC's development and future musical direction;
- To plan concert repertoire in conjunction with the Directors and Choir Committee and to liaise with the Choir Librarian regarding all music required in a timely way;
- To engage soloists for each concert in advance of each season. Engagement will be subject to a signed YPC contract.

- To liaise with the organiser of the Amici orchestra, or other accompanying musicians, in advance of all concerts, to establish orchestra size and other rehearsal and performance requirements.
- To provide up to date personal information for inclusion in publicity literature and in each concert programme and any repertoire notes or other relevant matters requested by the choir's programme editor;
- To audition prospective new members, with the accompanist, informing them, by email or in writing, of the outcome;
- To annually audition Margaret Markland Bursary applicants at the Leeds Conservatoire and award them the annual Bursary;
- To oversee Bursary winners in rehearsals during their Bursary year;
- To attend YPC Choir Committee meetings as a non-voting member of the committee;
- To present a report at the AGM of YPC Ltd.

Outline Selection Procedure

Please submit your application for this position **to the address highlighted below** by our closing date of **31 January 2023**.

Your application should include:

1. A covering letter giving your reasons for wanting to become the Musical Director of the Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir.
2. A brief CV.
3. The name and address of 2 referees, one of whom is a professional musician able to comment on your work in Choral Music as a choral director and one able to provide a wider reference to your character.
4. A sample 3 year concert plan, of 4 concerts per year - Autumn, Christmas, Spring, Summer - for the YPC. For the purpose of this submission, you may consider the Christmas Concert as a 'Carol Concert' without further detail.

You should indicate the reasons for your choices.

5. We will then shortlist 4 candidates for interview in Wakefield with a recruitment committee from the Choir followed, in the evening, by the candidate leading a 45-minute rehearsal with the full YPC.

This will take place on either - Tuesday 4th or 11th April 2023 and candidates will be informed which date they have been allocated (Candidates should note these dates fall around Easter).

6. The structure of the 45-minute rehearsal will be at each candidate's discretion but should include:
 1. A 5-minute vocal warm up.
 2. A brief introduction about themselves.
 3. Rehearse two pieces selected by the choir - one piece the choir will know well, one it will not know well. These pieces will be notified to each candidate in advance of the interview date, the choir will provide sufficient music copies.
 4. After all 4 shortlisted candidates have rehearsed the choir, YPC members will have the opportunity to feedback their opinions, however, the decision will ultimately be made by the recruitment Committee who will recommend a successful candidate to the Directors and Choir Committee.
- The successful candidate will be notified by the end of April 2023 and a full contract will be sent, to be returned, signed, by mid May 2023.
- The successful candidate will be invited to meet the Directors and Choir Committee towards the end of June, on a date to be mutually agreed.

Key dates

- 31 January 2023 – Application Closing date
- 14 March 2023 – Shortlisted Candidates notified
- 4th or 11 April 2023 – Interview & Rehearsal
- 30 April 2023 – Confirmation of appointment
- Mid-May – Signed acceptance required
- Late June – Meeting with Directors and Choir Committee
- Tuesday 5 September 2023 – First rehearsal with YPC

Application:

If you wish to apply for this post, please send your application to: ypcmdvacancy@gmail.com by 31 January 2023

Contract & Remuneration

The successful candidate will be employed in line with 'The Contract for Musical Director' developed by Making Music (MM) in association with The Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM) and the Association of British Choral Directors (ABCD).

A copy of the full contract is attached.

Under the contract, the YPC will be engaging you on a self-employed basis, as an independent contractor who is responsible for their own income tax, national insurance contributions and VAT returns.

The appointment will be subject to a one season (2023/24) probationary period at the end of which the Directors and Choir Committee will review the performance of the Musical Director. During this probationary period either the YPC or the Musical Director may give each other notice to end the arrangement forthwith.

At the end of a successful probationary period, the Musical Director will be confirmed in post at the next choir AGM.

From thereon, the performance of the Musical Director and the success of the role will be reviewed annually.

Fees:

The following fees will be paid on the production of an invoice, monthly in arrears:

- A. A fee of £750 for each concert. This fee covers payment and expenses relating to all preparation for the concert including leading the final rehearsal on the afternoon of the concert.
- B. A fee of £150 for each 2-hour weekly rehearsal and any additional rehearsal prior to a concert agreed with the choir committee.
- C. Out of pocket expenses, agreed in advance by the Choir Committee, may be reimbursed but these will exclude any travel expenses.
- D. Fees will be reviewed annually taking into account the financial position of the choir, the performance and success of the choir and other comparative information.

Method of Payment:

Fees will be paid following the receipt by the Choir Treasurer, of an invoice, monthly in arrears. This should detail the rehearsals, concerts and any agreed expenses for the month just past.

Payment will be made by bank transfer in the week following receipt of the invoice or as soon as possible thereafter.