

**London
Sinfonietta**
making new music

**London Sinfonietta
Council Members/Trustees
Recruitment and Information Brief
February 2026**



Welcome from the Chair of the Council, Fiona Thompson

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Council Member. We are one of the world's foremost contemporary arts organisations, and we are looking for new Council Members who share our passion for the transformative effect of music, can help us continue to commission and premiere new work, engage with new audiences and talent, and add to the diversity and effectiveness of our decision-making.

I joined the Council as Chair in 2021 and am one of twelve Council Members (charity trustees) who are responsible for setting the strategic vision of London Sinfonietta and for its oversight and governance. I wanted to be involved in an organisation that has the power to transform lives. London Sinfonietta's mission to make new music means it is always on the cutting-edge of developments in the creative arts - shaping, responding to and reflecting the society in which we live. It takes risks and constantly challenges my perceptions. And it's close to my personal interests in arts and educational opportunities.

We are particularly looking for Trustees with expertise in financial and risk management; fundraising and income generation; audience development and marketing. If you are inspired by what we do and would like to commit a small part of your life to help us achieve our artistic and charitable aims, we very much look forward to hearing from you. More details about the role are outlined below.

Fiona Thompson
Chair, London Sinfonietta Council

About London Sinfonietta

London Sinfonietta is at the forefront of contemporary arts in the UK and internationally. We are one of the world's finest contemporary music ensembles with a reputation built on cutting-edge programming and virtuosic performances. Founded in 1968, we have commissioned over 470 new works and premiered hundreds more.

We always seek to inspire more people with the sound of new music - across contemporary classical, jazz and experimental music - at venues including contemporary arts spaces, electronic music venues, international concert halls, and in community settings. We are resident at London's Southbank Centre and an Artistic Associate at Kings Place, and we have an extensive catalogue of recordings. We develop new talent from school projects through to early career professionals, ensuring the next generation of contemporary music creators. We break new ground in the digital sphere, such as our creation of an app with the composer Steve Reich, and the launch of our own digital channel, both of which have a world-wide reach.

**“The world's top
new music ensemble”**
The Times



Our work

We believe that contemporary arts and music are relevant to all people's lives, and commission and produce work that addresses issues affecting modern society, to connect with wider audiences and engage their imaginations. In 2021, we pioneered in the UK the first ever entirely bicycle-powered classical concert, working with theatre director Katie Mitchell in the staging of [Laura Bowler's Houses Slide \(2021\)](#). More recently, we staged Alicia Jane Turner's one-person opera [Tell me when you get home](#) with an all-female and non-binary creative team, which explored gendered experiences of walking home alone at night. We regularly collaborate with artists from other [genres](#) and have also worked extensively with choreographers, visual artists and animators.

Our participation and learning work has gone from strength to strength over the past 35 years, after we were the first orchestra in the UK to establish a music education programme in the early 1980s. We reach thousands of people a year via public participation opportunities at concerts and events, schools and community engagement (both live and online) including our [Sound Out](#) concerts and [Composition Challenge](#) workshops and concerts involving the public on stage with us. Our [talent development programmes](#) provide world-class training to early career musicians through our side-by-side projects and composers are supported on our recurring [Writing the Future](#) scheme which, in its latest round, supported, produced and performed the work of four music creators including those from non-classical and diverse backgrounds.

The London Sinfonietta is a member of the Arts Council England's National Portfolio of Organisations and has confirmed funding from them until at least the end of March 2028, by when (along with all other NPO organisations in the UK) we will have reapplied to remain in the Portfolio.

We are now starting to work towards our 60th Anniversary of the organisation which lands in January 2028.



“You are given the opportunity to dream big and fulfil the creation of projects that are ambitious, which is rare as an emerging composer, and having these performed as part of the London Sinfonietta’s season is invaluable for exposure. [London Sinfonietta is] an ensemble truly dedicated to bold, new work and nurturing relationships with composers who are underrepresented and from different backgrounds, which is so needed in this industry.”

- Alicia Jane Turner, Writing the Future 2022

The role

London Sinfonietta seeks up to three new Council Members/Trustees who will use their skills and experience to help the Council and organisation. Trustees examine, challenge and support the operational delivery and strategic direction of the charity’s activities. They also bring an independent perspective to the work of the London Sinfonietta, with specific subject matter expertise.

The [Council/Board of Trustees](#) is principally accountable to the Charity Commission and donors and ensures that the activities of the charitable company meet public benefit requirements. It currently includes twelve members: nine independents with a range of backgrounds and experiences, the Chief Executive, and two Principal Players. The Board actively engages with the executive team on governance matters and in sharing decisions.

The broad areas of the work of the Board includes:

- **Strategic direction:** ensuring that the charity is responding to the changing external environment across programme areas
- **Performance:** monitoring the performance of the executive against strategic and operational plans
- **Assurance:** contributing to the identification and monitoring of risk; ensuring there are adequate short and longer term financial plans in place to deliver strategy; monitoring adherence to standards of charity governance.

Our ten-year strategic framework was agreed by the Council in 2022. It sets out our key ambitions: **to make a 21st Century new music programme relevant & accessible to a wider audience; to create social impact through our activities; to evolve an inclusive and equitable organisation and ensemble of artists; and to remain a resilient and sustainable organisation.** We successfully retained our place in Arts Council England’s National Portfolio in the latest 2022 bidding round, but in common with many London based organisations, at a reduced level. Since then we have undertaken a review of our purpose, vision and branding to reimagine how best to deliver our strategy and have exciting plans to diversify our income and grow our international touring programme.

New members will therefore be overseeing a period of change, and we are seeking people who will enjoy being part of this and can contribute to this phase of our development. The areas in which we particularly seek support for the next phase of London Sinfonietta’s ambitions are:

- Qualified financial, risk and audit expertise, preferably with charity governance experience, willing to chair the finance and audit committee of the Board



- Fundraising, commercial income generation, and growing and diversifying an income base either in a not-for-profit environment, or through personal networks and lead/contacts development
- Audience development and marketing tactics and projects in order to build our audiences from different cultural sectors and demographics, including data-driven insight that can be drawn from the use of Tessitura for ticket sales at the Southbank Centre.

Charity trustees are unpaid; however we believe that this role can secure non-financial rewards, including contributing to the arts and wider charitable sector, providing post-holders with opportunities to grow and develop their own leadership and career aspirations, broadening personal outlooks and experience, and enhancing confidence as a board and committee member.

London Sinfonietta is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment in which everyone can thrive. We value and appreciate new ideas and perspectives that may help to bring the exciting world of contemporary music to a wider audience. As an organisation that exists to shape, reflect and respond to the society in which we live, we want our organisation to be representative of the communities where we work, encompassing a wide range of different backgrounds and experiences. We would encourage applications from those beyond the music or creative arts sector to broaden our expertise.

It is not necessary to have previous board or committee experience, although applicants should have regard to the role description. Where learning or development support may be required, this can be highlighted in the application process. More details of our governance structure and the role of a Council Member are given in the Appendix.

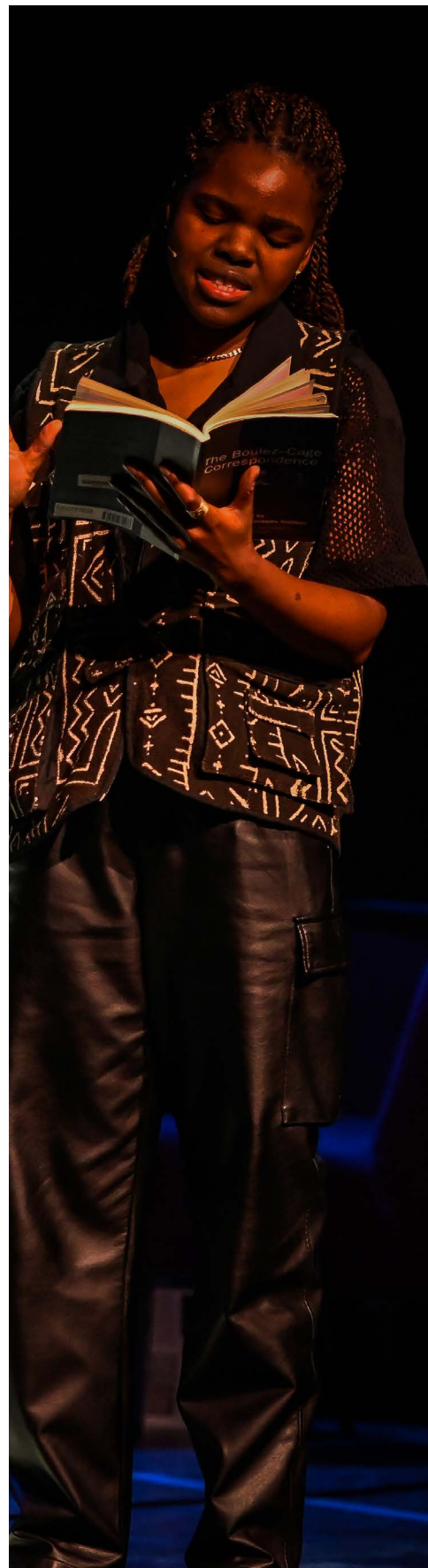
Time commitment

Board meetings are held in person at least four times a year, normally between 6.00 and 8.00pm, with papers being provided by e-mail at least five working days before the meeting. A short meeting for the AGM and to approve the Annual Report and Accounts also takes place virtually and there is usually at least one annual Board/management team strategy day.

Council members are also expected to join at least one of the Board's sub-committees, either as a member or being asked to Chair. These meet two or three times a year, normally for two hours during the daytime. The Board periodically reviews the membership of committees and this allows for members to move to different areas of oversight or for the time they have available for the individual committee roles to be taken into account.

Additional time will be required for reading papers and preparing for meetings, for advisory meetings and calls on an ad hoc basis, either with the Board or the management team, and to attend as many performances as possible. The outlined time commitment above is a minimum and of course, we welcome candidates who are able to offer more; however we aim to be flexible to accommodate individuals' other commitments.

Council members are appointed for a three-year term, renewable for a maximum of nine years.



How to apply

To be considered for these Council positions, please submit your Curriculum Vitae and supporting letter, addressed to Andrew Burke at recruitment@londonsinfonietta.org.uk by **Monday 13 April 2026**.

Your letter should explain why you wish to join us and how you feel your contribution would be of value to London Sinfonietta's Council and should be no longer than two sides of A4 paper.

In addition, we would be grateful if you could complete the [Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form](#) with your application. Please note that the responses submitted are anonymous and for monitoring effectiveness of our recruitment processes only and will not be used by the interview panel for the purposes of selection.

Closing date for applications: Monday 13 April 2026

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged.

Those shortlisted will in the first instance be invited to meet the Chair, Chief Executive and other members of the Council at a mutually convenient date likely to be in the week of 27 April 2026. If you require any of this information in an alternative format (e.g. Microsoft Word) or if you would like an informal conversation about the role before applying to be arranged, please contact Andrew Burke on andrew.burke@londonsinfonietta.org.uk

Data Protection

London Sinfonietta is aware of its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and is committed to processing your data securely and transparently. Please visit <https://londonsinfonietta.org.uk/privacy-and-cookie-policy> to access our Applicant Privacy Notice which sets out, in line with GDPR, the types of data that we collect and hold on you and how the data is processed.

Other information

Further details on the work we do can be found on our [website](#).

A full list of Council Members and a Staff List can be found [here](#).

Recent annual reports can be downloaded from the [Charities Commission website](#).



APPENDIX

Governance & Structure

Sinfonietta Productions Ltd (operating under the name London Sinfonietta) is legally constituted as both a company limited by guarantee (Company No. 00926551) and a registered charity (Charity Reg. No. 255095). Board members are therefore Directors of the Company and Trustees of the Charity and the organisation uses the term 'Council' to refer to its Board of Directors/Trustees.

The Council is the leadership body for the charity which ensures that strategic and operational decisions are congruent with the mission and objectives of the organisation and that the Charity operates within the laws and regulations that govern it. The artistic programme, operational decisions, staff and ensemble management are delegated to the Chief Executive & Artistic Director Andrew Burke and his team of c. 12 which comprises a mix of part and full-time staff, plus regular freelancers. The Management Team is responsible for the day-to-day running of the ensemble and organisation including its performance output, business operations and financial management. The ensemble itself consists of a group of freelance Principal Players, alongside an extended network of regular players and emerging talent and will expand or contract in size depending on the repertoire.

London Sinfonietta is a member of the Art's Council's National Portfolio of Organisations, and receives £300,000 a year in support, with funding recently confirmed up to March 2028. The Council has a key role in monitoring performance under this contract.

London Sinfonietta Council Trustee/Board Membership Policy

This policy comprises three principles.

- **RELEVANT EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE** - The Council of an arts organisation should comprise of people who between them have expertise in areas relevant to the work of the organisation and the roles undertaken by its management team, enabling them to support its activities with advice and oversight.
- **FINANCIAL RESILIENCE** - Members of the Council take responsibility for the financial sustainability of the organisation, including helping to raise funds for the organisation either proactively engaging in the organisation's fundraising projects and campaigns, through their direct donation, or utilising their contacts.
- **DIVERSE** - London Sinfonietta seeks to build a Council that has a balanced mix of gender, age, experience and background, representing the society in which it is active and providing a range of views for appropriate challenge and debate.

**“If I was the British Government, I’d declare
the London Sinfonietta a national treasure...”**

Steve Reich



Description of the Role

Policy and Strategic Planning

- Work alongside the Chief Executive to develop good governance, agree strategic vision and mission and guide the organisation towards achieving its goals
- Work with the Chief Executive and staff to develop, maintain and revise the strategy/ annual business plans
- Monitor all aspects of delivery against the annual business plan on a regular and ongoing basis
- Define key company policies and monitor their implementation.

Fundraising and Advocacy

- Support the organisation's fundraising activities, recognising that demonstration of the Council's commitment can leverage additional support
- Create and nurture connections with a view to developing future philanthropy
- Act as an enthusiastic ambassador for the ensemble
- Attend concerts and functions acting as a key part of the public face of the organisation

Legal and Financial

- Ensure that the company operates within Company and Charity Law
- Ensure the prudent financial management of the Company, exercising financial control, scrutinising financial statements and approving annual budgets (drafted by the management team)
- Ensure that the company's assets are safeguarded and well managed and maintained

Employment and Personnel

- Appoint the Chief Executive & Artistic Director, advising on staffing structure and taking part in recruitment (when required)
- Help define and approve the company's employment policies, including diversity and inclusion, equal opportunities, recruitment, pay, grievance and disciplinary
- Ensure the safe and efficient use of premises for both staff and public (health and safety)
- Appraise the Chief Executive, self-assess the performance of the Council, and be appraised by the Chair of the Council

Company Law

Under Company Law, Directors have certain legal, financial and fiduciary duties and Trustees must also comply with charity law. The requirements of some funding bodies also place responsibilities on members of the governing body. Even though many of these duties are delegated to management, and the Council is called upon to make clear decisions about such delegation, the ultimate responsibility for every aspect of the company's operation lies with the Board of Directors. It is therefore important that all Council Members ensure that they understand the history of the organisation and its current situation and keep abreast of issues that might affect the organisation, as well as familiarise themselves with the responsibilities and liabilities of trustees and company directors. This role specification includes a summary overview of these legal responsibilities and any additional duties that might be expected of a London Sinfonietta Council Member.



Personal Responsibilities

Council Members are expected to:

Carry out the duties of a Trustee/Council Member

- Commit to act always in the best interests of the Charity and ensure that the mission of the organisation is at the centre of all that is done
- Attend all Council meetings - normally four per year, plus any workshops
- Read, understand and scrutinise Council papers and gather other relevant knowledge in order to support evidence-based decision making
- Understand and respect the role of a non-executive
- Participate in one of the standing Committees which review different areas of the organisation's work across the year. This will take some extra time to review and comment on papers, as well as be part of discussion in the relevant areas. Currently the committees are the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee, the Income Generation Committee and the Programme Strategy Committee.

Work with other Council Members and management staff in helping to fundraise

- Fully engage with the fundraising strategy of the organisation
- Network and advocate at events and fundraising opportunities
- Where possible introduce personal connections as potential donors
- Make some financial contribution - at whatever level - in recognition that donations from Council Members create a strong external message of support

Show significant enthusiasm for the work of the organisation

- Attend some London Sinfonietta Concerts and Events annually, across all areas of its work
- Be willing to advocate for the organisation to personal connections and contacts
- Be willing to connect the organisation to their own professional contacts where suitable

Be well informed about the work of London Sinfonietta

- Knowledge of the full range of events and genres within the ensemble's work
- Familiarity with all the major strategic changes and directions that the organisation undertakes

Deal openly and with integrity with colleagues, Council Members and staff

- Scrutinise and question strategic and operational plans and policy in a collegiate and respectful way
- Be willing to contribute in meetings and offer diverse thoughts and opinions in a constructive manner

Offer personal and business skills and experience to support the management team

Treat sensitive information confidentially

