

Programme and Orchestras Assistant

NCO Job Recruitment Pack



Contents

- 1. About National Children's Orchestras**
- 2. About the role**
- 3. Our commitments**
- 4. Who we are looking for**
- 5. Safeguarding**
- 6. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**
- 6. How to apply**



1. About National Children's Orchestras

Purpose

Our purpose is to champion the life-changing power of music.

Mission

Together, we are using the power of music to create a supportive community that enriches lives.

We empower children to uncover the joy of orchestral music, unleash their creativity, realise their ambitions and embrace a future filled with endless possibilities. The confidence, resilience and teamwork learned through music become skills for life, wherever each young musician's journey takes them.

National Children's Orchestras was founded in 1978 by Vivienne Price MBE who recognised a lack of provision for younger aged musicians to engage with orchestral music. NCO set out to provide opportunities for children aged 8-14 to discover the joy of orchestral playing at the highest level, during a period of their lives when many give up their music as they transition to secondary school. Fast forward 48 years, there are approximately 24,000 NCO alumni, many of whom are professional musicians and music teachers across the globe.

Today, nearly 2000 children aged 8-14 connect with NCO each year. They take part through:

- Auditioned orchestral weeks and weekends
- Non-auditioned workshops
- Activities with schools and hubs
- Free tickets to concerts

The next few years will be defined by a significant expansion of free, non-auditioned activities and initiatives, increasing NCO's reach and impact by enabling thousands more children to play together, to be creative and to embrace the possibilities that music can offer them.



Our values influence everything we do and how we do it.

We believe no *dream* is too big.

When we're free to dream, explore, create and play, the world opens up. In music and in life, dream big - you never know what incredible things you'll discover along the way.

Dare to Dream



**We believe orchestral music shapes
*skills and hearts.***

Orchestral music is a wondrous world that nurtures empathy, resilience, and the courage to face whatever life throws our way. It builds strength of spirit, deepening connections to ourselves and the world around us.

Strength of spirit



**We believe everyone has their own
*brilliance.***

Everyone has a unique potential waiting to shine. In a supportive, inclusive environment, we can discover our own brilliance, find our voice, and grow with confidence and creativity.

Every Voice Matters



**We believe in the power of
*community.***

Our power lies in our unity; we grow together, support each other, and become something greater as one.

The Power of Us



Play together. Be unstoppable.

2. Our commitments

Our commitments to our administrative team include:

- A professional development plan for each employee that includes training, support and mentoring and can lead to progression within the organisation
 - Employee Health Plan
 - Real Living Wage Employer
 - Networking opportunities within Bristol and the music/wider arts sector
 - Two team away-days each year when no one does any work!
 - A light, fully accessible and modern office in Bristol's creative quarter, Paintworks, managed by Ethical Property with friendly neighbours also working in charities and organisations that make life better
 - Empathetic arrangements for hybrid working that enable staff to manage their work/life balance and provide parents/carers, or people with disabilities, with the flexibility they need
 - 23 days' annual leave per year (pro rata) plus the working days between Christmas and New Year plus Public Holidays
 - Pension Scheme
 - A rota for car parking and secure bike storage on site
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3. About the role

Programme & Orchestras Assistant

Location: NCO is based at Streamline, Paintworks, Bristol BS4 3AS. We are happy to consider candidates based outside Bristol/South West who can work remotely 2 days, with 3 days in Bristol each week

Salary: £28,000 / Pension Scheme / 23 days' annual leave per annum plus bank holidays and working days between Christmas and New Year

Contract: Full-time, permanent

Reports to: Programme and Orchestras Director

Role to start: April 2026

Scope

The Programme team is responsible for the planning and delivery of all NCO activity: We are looking for a new Programme & Orchestras Assistant who will support the Programme and Orchestras team across all NCO programmes. This includes, but is not limited to, Orchestral Weeks, Orchestral Weekends, Orchestral Days, Schools Concerts, Student Placements, NCO Digital Programme and Auditions. They will support with the delivery of activity across the UK with evening, weekend and school holiday working required. They will work with the Programme and Orchestras Director, Programme and Orchestras Managers and Head of Engagement on planning and delivery of the annual programme.

You can find out more about key responsibilities on the next page.



Key Responsibilities

- Issue contracts to freelance workforce e.g. Music Tutors, Support Team, Specialist Leads, Guest Artists and Conductors, as well as completing NCOs safer recruitment process and supporting the onboarding of new freelancers
- Working away from the office, on site, during Orchestral Weekends, Orchestral Days and Orchestral Weeks activity as Assistant Orchestra Manager, supporting the Orchestra Managers, Head of Engagement and freelance teams
- Keep accurate records of the freelance workforce using NCO's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, Beacon
- Manage the online application and ongoing monitoring of DBS certificates for the freelance team
- Create activity-related documentation including orchestra lists, schedules, signage and ID lanyards
- Use NCO's CRM system to extract data to support online and in-person activities, e.g. registers, health, wellbeing & dietary and photobooks
- Liaise with the Communications Team to schedule and maintain timely communications with parents/carers and members e.g. sharing pre-activity information sheets and gathering health and wellbeing information
- Work with the Programme and Orchestras Team to order and collate equipment ahead of activities including, first aid/medical, musical instruments, digital devices, recreational materials and other resources
- Support the Programme and Orchestra Managers in annual Student Placement recruitment and administration
- Support the delivery of NCO's Orchestral Days and schools projects.
- Support the set up and delivery of NCO's Digital Programme
- Work collaboratively to ensure MyNCO, the member website (currently WordPress) is resourced in advance of the membership year and is kept up to date, uploading new events, resources and photos as required, as well as basic video editing and uploading recordings to Vimeo
- Administrate digital access for freelance teams to relevant information ahead of activities, using a variety of programmes and platforms, including Zoom, SharePoint and Microsoft 365
- Administrative support for the delivery of the annual digital auditions process
- Provide support to the Programme and Orchestras and Communications Teams and Head of Engagement prior to and during activities as required. This might include supporting orchestral management, filming concerts using in-house equipment, activity-related member communications and collating information for concert programmes
- Provide support to the Head of Engagement and Orchestra Managers prior to and during Orchestral Days, acting as Support Team for these days, and undertaking Level 3 Safeguarding training prior to working on this activity
- Any other duties required by NCO

4. Who we are looking for

Someone with the following:

- A passion for the transformative power of orchestral music making for all young people
- Previous experience of administrative working. This could include paid or voluntary experience
- The ability to work collaboratively within a small team to deliver large-scale events at pace
- A flexible, positive, solution-focussed attitude
- The ability to work effectively under pressure with professionalism and good humour.
- Excellent organisational skills and attention to detail
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to connect with a wide range of people
- Confident and working knowledge of Microsoft 365 (Excel, Word, Outlook, SharePoint, etc.) and a willingness to learn other applications, databases, other software programmes and equipment as required
- All new staff are required to provide an Enhanced DBS certificate or undertake an Enhanced DBS check on appointment to the role

You may also have:

- Experience of and interest in supporting the delivery of orchestral activities within music education
- Understanding and knowledge of music
- Experience of working with children and young people including safeguarding and dealing with sensitive information
- Experience of working with databases
- Experience of basic video recording, editing, websites and social media
- First aid training
- Full driving licence



5. Safeguarding

NCO is committed to safeguarding and protecting the children in our programme. We ensure that our organisation has a range of policies and procedures in place so that we can do everything possible to safeguard our members. Applicants should possess relevant enhanced DBS documentation or be willing to undergo a new check with NCO.

[You can read NCO's Safeguarding Policy on our website.](#)

6. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

You can read [NCO's Equality Statement on our website.](#)

We are committed to being an Equal Opportunities employer and attracting diverse talent from sections of the community currently underrepresented in the culture sector to help us to develop a more diverse workforce.

[Please fill in this anonymous equal opportunities form before completing your application.](#)



7. How to Apply

[All applications must be submitted using this application form.](#)

You can find the application questions listed below to allow you to prepare them in advance, but you do need to complete the form to apply for the role. You will also need to supply the names and contact details for two references.

- 1. In place of a cover letter, please use this space to tell us a bit more about why you want to work at NCO and what attracts you to this role (500 words max.)*
- 2. Please refer to the job description and tell us how your skills and experience meet the responsibilities outlined (500 words max.)*
- 3. Please refer to the We are looking for section and provide evidence of how your personal attributes, skills and experience meet the criteria. (500 words max.)*
- 4. Please use this space to succinctly list your work experience and education history in chronological order*
- 5. Please detail your relevant qualifications and any other training you have undertaken*
- 6. If you have any gaps in your work experience or education and would like to let us know, you can tell us about them here or at interview. (optional)*

If you would like to talk to us about this role before you apply, please email Tammy Daly (Programme and Orchestras Director) t.daly@nco.org.uk

Deadline: Monday 9th March at 9am

First Round Interviews w.c. 16th March, in person in Bristol

Second Round Interviews (if needed) tbc