



"It's changed my life; it's forged my life"

Choir member 2023

Chief Executive Candidate Information Pack



NYCOS

National Youth Choir
of Scotland

BACKGROUND

OUR MISSION

NYCOS is the organisation dedicated to encouraging singing for young people in Scotland. We provide opportunities for young people, teachers and choir directors to support and develop choral singing across Scotland.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- › To establish, encourage, enhance and support singing at all levels to the highest standards for Scotland's young people
- › To provide training, support and resources for those who direct choral singing and deliver vocal education.
- › To be a powerful advocate for choral singing at all levels of cultural and educational life in Scotland
- › To prepare young people for the profession by providing a pathway to and through Higher Education

HISTORY

'Mighty oaks from little acorns grow.' Described as one of the UK's most exciting youth organisations with a reach and impact that stretches from these islands across the world. Over its 28 years of existence NYCOS has grown from one national choir into a multi-faceted organisation that comprises eight National Choirs, 14 Regional Choirs across Scotland, Mini Music Maker classes, an impressive education portfolio having worked with all 32 local authorities in Scotland, an extensive training programme for specialists, non-specialists and choir staff, as well as a growing catalogue of commissions, publications and educational resources.

There are few in the worlds of music and education that don't recognise our name, and for each person they will have their own unique experience of the combination of activities that NYCOS offers, be it a regional choir, an education programme, a publication, a class for a toddler or an astounding performance from the flagship national choirs.

For many conductors, orchestras and festivals, a NYCOS ensemble is the first choice of choir. In an average year, around 10,000 children and young people have contact with NYCOS. This contact can range from a one-one workshop to a thirty-week Regional Choir commitment. Approximately 200 staff are employed throughout Scotland to deliver NYCOS activities and are managed by an administration team led by the Chief Executive and Artistic Director at the Head Office in Glasgow.



"They are, beyond debate, the best choir in Scotland"

The Herald

NATIONAL CHOIRS

Membership of the National Choirs is determined by annual audition and is open to singers who are born, reside or study in Scotland. The average number of singers in National Choirs is 400. Every school in Scotland in the state and independent sectors is sent audition information. Each choir has a national residential course where the works are prepared for the following season. At the end of the annual course a public concert is held in various cities across Scotland.

The breakdown of the choirs is as follows:

NYCOS Chamber Choir

for up to 26 very experienced singers aged 18-25

National Youth Choir of Scotland

for singers aged 16-25 years

NYCOS Training Choir

for singers aged 16-19 years

NYCOS National Boys Choir

for singers aged 10-17 years

Structured in three sections: Training Choir, National Boys Choir, Changing Voice Choir

NYCOS National Girls Choir

for singers aged 12-17 years

Structured in two sections: Training Choir, National Girls Choir



"NYCOS Chamber Choir takes the pursuit of excellence with the young musicians of Scotland to another level. If the full forces of the senior choir have already impressed some of the world's top conductors in performances in Edinburgh, London, Europe and the United States, this elite unit of between 20 and 30 young voices is a refinement of that success. The coming to maturity of the organisation is perfectly celebrated in the birth of this choir."

Keith Bruce, Vox Carnyx



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REGIONAL CHOIRS

The aims of the 14 Regional Choirs, which meet weekly during school term time, are to encourage singing to the best of the singer's ability, to learn to read music and to develop and train the voice. Membership is open to children in Primary 4 (aged 8) and upwards and they are able remain in the choir until they leave school a decade later. Every primary school within a twenty-minute drive of a Regional Choir is offered a free recruitment workshop for Primary 3 children. The average annual membership of NYCOS Regional Choirs is around 1,200 children who attend weekly activity during the academic year. We intend to grow this number.

At each weekly rehearsal, the time is split between choral singing and musicianship skills where the children work through a progressive programme of learning to read and understand music. In addition to the weekly rehearsals, every choir has a summer and winter concert and many choirs undertake outside engagements, which can be anything from working with local and professional orchestras to Music Societies, Local Authority showcases and charity events.



"The NYCOS network of Regional Choirs – all feeding into the National Boys Choir, National Girls Choir and NYCOS itself – makes an incalculable contribution to music education in Scotland"

The Herald



"The transferable skills from coming here (NYCOS)...really stand them in good stead for whatever they're doing in life"

Regional Choir Parent



"I love the variety of repertoire that we get to perform. Through the years my confidence has grown a lot and being on the stage with your friends is the best thing in the world."

Regional Choir Member

MINI MUSIC MAKERS AND MUSIC MAKERS

This is a network of groups engaging children aged between 0-7 years and their parents in singing activities. Groups meet weekly in two locations and have approximately 125 attendances per year.

CREATIVE LEARNING

A core objective of NYCOS is to provide training, support and resources for those who deliver vocal and choral education. Trainers work to support music education in schools, local authorities and other formal and informal organisations such as Sistema Scotland, Scottish Book Trust, Children in Scotland and Chamber Music Scotland.

Our Creative Learning Director Lucinda Geoghegan has delivered musicianship programmes around the world to music professionals and class music teachers. We deliver a range of projects including our Signed Singing and Mini Melodies (Early Years) projects in addition to YMI schools work.

NYCOS is an advocate for vocal and choral provision in schools and is represented on national committees.

PUBLICATIONS

Publications and resources for specialists and non-specialist teachers and choir leaders are developed, written and published by NYCOS.

The Go for Bronze, Silver and Gold Programme was published to take the young person through a planned programme of musicianship, theory and sight singing resulting in an exemption from ABRSM Grade Theory if successful at Gold level.

The Singing Games and Rhymes series of six books cover 'Tiny Tots' to 'Ages 9-99'. These games, largely based on folk songs introduce and develop musical concepts through singing and build the foundations of beat, rhythm and melody.



JOB DESCRIPTION

CHIEF EXECUTIVE CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

- › To work closely with the Artistic Director in ensuring that NYCOS is able to deliver on its charitable purpose, vision and mission and to create the conditions in which that can flourish.
- › To work closely with the Artistic Director to lead the strategic development of NYCOS.
- › To be responsible for stakeholder relations.
- › To oversee the management of finance, fundraising and support functions of the organisation.

Reports to: Chair of the Board

ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- › Ensure appropriate administrative, financial, production, contractual, marketing, fundraising processes and structures are in place for effective delivery of NYCOS activities.
- › Ensure that the organisation's business plan is implemented, reviewed and updated when appropriate.
- › Ensure that the company's equality, diversity and inclusion plan is implemented, updated and reported on.
- › Ensure that the company's Fair Work plan is implemented, updated and reported on.
- › Ensure that the company's Environmental Sustainability Plan is implemented, updated and reported on.
- › Ensuring that appropriate processes are in place for recruitment, contracting, support, development and training of staff.

GOVERNANCE

- › Oversee the legal and financial affairs of the organisation to ensure it complies with statutory requirements and best practice in company administration.
- › Manage relationship with the Board, preparing agenda and papers for Board meetings.

EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

- › Manage relationships with Creative Scotland, Scottish and local government and other public sector stakeholders, including submission of grant applications and management of funding agreements.
- › Manage relationships with other arts and educational organisations.
- › Support external engagement and tours for National Choirs.
- › Manage relationships with the organisation's auditors, bankers, legal and financial advisors to ensure appropriate advice and services are provided.
- › Ensure effective relationships with sponsors, donors and other supporters.
- › Ensure effective relationships with the media.
- › Act and speak on behalf of NYCOS.
- › Represent NYCOS at functions and events within and outwith Scotland.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- › Direct the preparation of budgets for approval by the Board.
- › Ensure effective monitoring of annual income and expenditure budgets.
- › Liaise with external accountants regarding preparation of figures including projections and comparison of actuals against budget for reporting of variances.



**"What keeps me coming to NYCOS is the songs. I love singing.
I love the games we play."**

Choir Member



PERSON SPECIFICATION

EXPERIENCE *Essential*

- › Significant senior management experience in the arts, culture, education or charity sector.
- › Experience of leading a team.
- › Demonstrable experience of advocacy and fundraising coupled with evidence of knowledge and understanding of statutory and voluntary fundraising sectors.
- › Experience of financial management at a high level of competency.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS *Essential*

- › Strong leadership skills with excellent interpersonal skills and political sensitivity.
- › Knowledge/love of choral music.
- › Experience of making and managing public sector funding applications.
- › Understanding in equality, diversity and inclusion.
- › Understanding of Fair Work in the Scottish cultural context.
- › Demonstrable financial literacy at a significant level, particularly in the management of a charity or arts organisation.
- › Knowledge and experience of developing and growing charitable income from a variety of sources such as grants, trusts and foundations, sponsorship, individual giving and the corporate sector.
- › Commitment to youth music and the development of young people.

Knowledge and Skills *Desirable*

- › Wide ranging contacts in the arts, education and public sector in Scotland.
- › Experience in working collaboratively to form effective partnerships.
- › Experience/understanding of advocating effectively for music education.
- › Knowledge of not-for-profit governance.
- › Significant knowledge of the Scottish music scene.
- › Current driving licence.

The ideal candidate is based in Scotland, knows and understands the Scottish music scene and is, or wishes to be well integrated into the Scottish musical community.

APPOINTMENT DETAILS

Job Title: Chief Executive

Reports to: Chair of Board of Directors

Terms: Full time, permanent with some evening and weekend work

Hours: 35 hours per week, with standard office hours, Monday to Friday with potential for some flexible working

Holidays: 34 days per annum including public holidays

Salary: £55,000 – £60,000 depending on experience

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply please submit your CV and covering letter outlining how your skills and experience meet the requirements of the role to jobs@nycos.co.uk

Closing Date: Monday 3 March 2025 at noon

First Round Interviews: Monday 10 March 2025

Final Interviews: Friday 14 March 2025



"...the National Youth Choir of Scotland must surely be one of the nation's finest music organisations. That much was evident from the Choir's magnificent and all-too-short International Festival concert, which combined piety, power and mischief to deeply moving effect."

David Kettle, The Scotsman 2023



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