

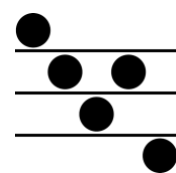


Hastings International Piano



Chief Executive Recruitment Pack

December 2025



## WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

*On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am delighted to invite applications for the role of Chief Executive of Hastings International Piano, a unique cultural initiative that combines a top-flight international competition with year-round piano-based community and education activity. We stand at an exciting point in our development: recognized as a world-leading platform for exceptional emerging artists, we aspire to greater renown and reach and transformational community impact.*



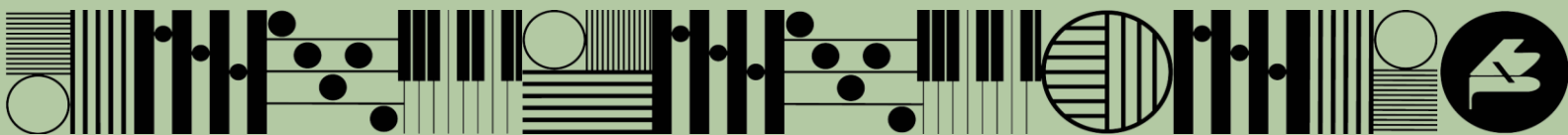
*Our Competition lies at the heart of who we are, known for its exceptional standards, its artistic partnerships, including Sinfonia Smith Square and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and the warmth with which Hastings welcomes young artists from across the world. It embodies the spirit of this town: creative, proud and open to possibility.*

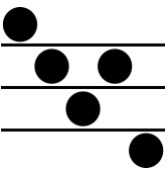
*Our vision now is to build on this momentum. We want to nurture outstanding pianists, grow our audiences, and demonstrate the powerful role that music can play in shaping a place with confidence and pride. HIP is poised to expand its impact, both locally and internationally, and to continue redefining what a place-based classical music organisation can achieve.*

*We are seeking a Chief Executive with the ambition, judgement and visionary leadership to help realise this next chapter, someone who can inspire others, build strong relationships, and lead our passionate team and volunteers with purpose and confidence.*

*If you share our belief in the potential of HIP and the promise of Hastings, we would be delighted to hear from you.*

Sarah Kowitz  
Chair, Hastings International Piano





## ABOUT HASTINGS INTERNATIONAL PIANO

Hastings International Piano (HIP) is a world-class platform for emerging pianists, celebrated internationally for artistic excellence, innovation, and its nurturing approach to young talent. Hastings has long been a place where exceptional music meets a passionate, engaged community. Today, HIP continues that legacy, blending international ambition with a deep sense of local identity and pride, and demonstrating the transformative power of music in both the town and the wider region.

HIP's significance extends beyond performance alone. It has become a cultural touchstone for Hastings, enhancing the town's reputation as a vibrant hub for the arts and providing experiences that are as enriching for local audiences as they are for the artists themselves. At every level, HIP embodies a rare combination of world-class standards, accessibility, and community connection.

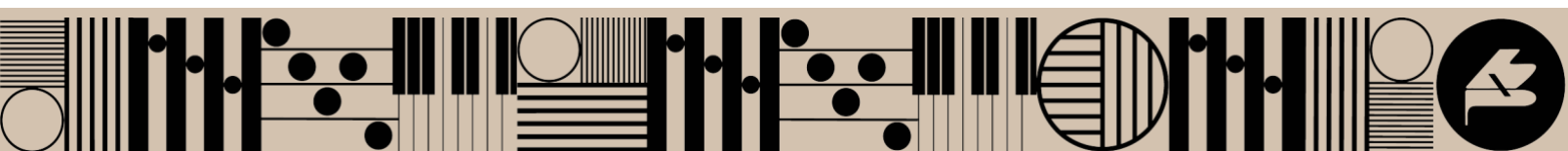
## MISSION AND VISION

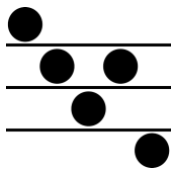
### Our Mission:

Nurturing musical talent, enriching lives through world class classical piano.

### Our Strategic Pillars:

- Artistic Excellence
- Financial Sustainability
- Good Governance
- Engage Broadest Audience
- Hastings Pride of Place





## ARTISTIC PROGRAMME

Hastings International Piano's artistic identity is defined by excellence, rigour, and the development of young talent. HIP's flagship event is the International Piano Competition, which attracts emerging pianists aged 16–30 from around the world to perform piano concerto repertoire before an international jury in a range of settings including a Final Round with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Alongside the competition, HIP presents concerts and chamber performances featuring leading international soloists, competition laureates, and collaborative partners, while offering artist-development opportunities that support emerging pianists at pivotal stages in their careers. The Chief Executive will work closely with the Artistic Director to support and amplify artistic ambitions, while leading strategy, operations, and community engagement.

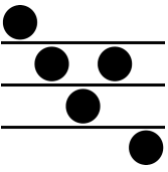
## LEARNING & PARTICIPATION

Hastings International Piano is committed to its responsibility to the wider community through a vibrant Learning & Participation programme, offering education and outreach initiatives that inspire and develop young musicians across Hastings while also engaging participants of all ages. Activities include:

- School workshops and visits.
- Performance and collaboration opportunities for young musicians.
- Programmes in SEN schools, care homes, and community settings.
- Community engagement initiatives that bring live music to schools, care settings, public spaces, and wider audiences.
- Free or subsidised tickets for young audiences, community groups, and public service employees.







## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Hastings International Piano works with a diverse and committed network of partners to support the artistic, educational, and community mission:

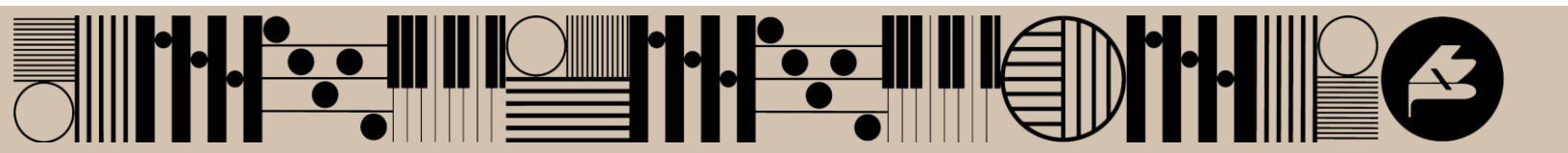
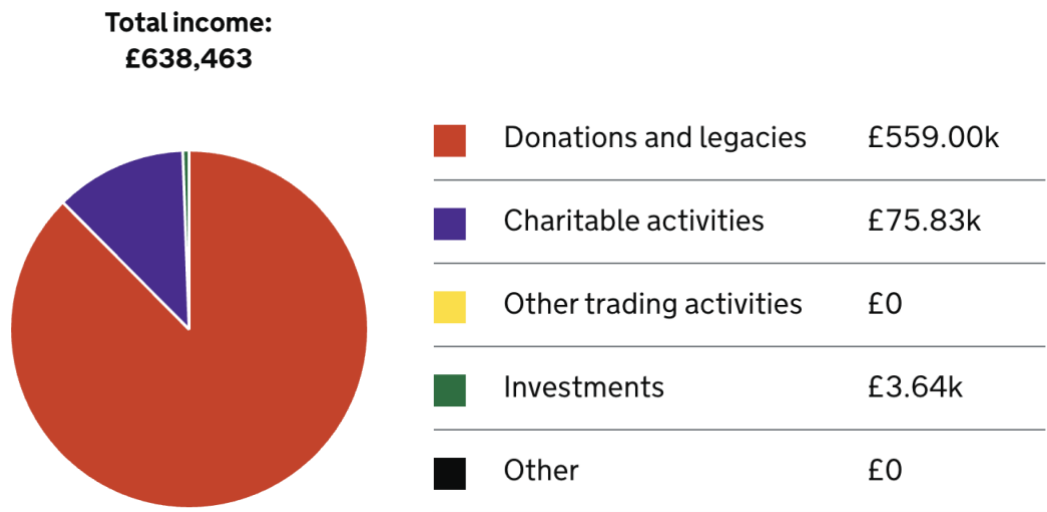
- Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Sinfonia Smith Square
- Trusts, Foundations & Patrons
- American Friends of Hastings International Piano
- Corporate Members & Business Sponsors, including Steinway & Sons
- Local Education Partners, schools and regional music hubs,
- Online Media

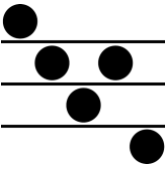
## TEAM

Hastings International Piano’s success is built on a small core team, supported by specialist freelancers and a highly engaged volunteer community. Together, they deliver the organisation’s ambitious competition and year-round activity with expertise, and commitment. The Chief Executive will lead and manage this diverse and highly skilled team, fostering collaboration, supporting development, and ensuring that HIP continues to deliver exceptional artistic, educational, and community outcomes.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Data for financial year ending 30 June 2024:





## JOB DESCRIPTION

### THE ROLE

The Chief Executive of Hastings International Piano will be responsible for guiding the organisation towards its artistic and strategic objectives while ensuring sustainable growth and operational excellence. This role involves representing HIP publicly and fostering strong relationships with key stakeholders, including the Chair and Board of Trustees, the Local Authority; a global network of international piano competitions, conservatoires, agents and promoters; individual donors and funders local education and community partners, and the wider cultural community. The Chief Executive will champion HIP's mission to support and showcase exceptional piano talent and inspire local engagement through visionary and pragmatic strategic leadership, assured advocacy and communications, and sound financial and operational capability. A passion for piano and classical music and to reach and engage Hastings' diverse audiences and communities are key to success.

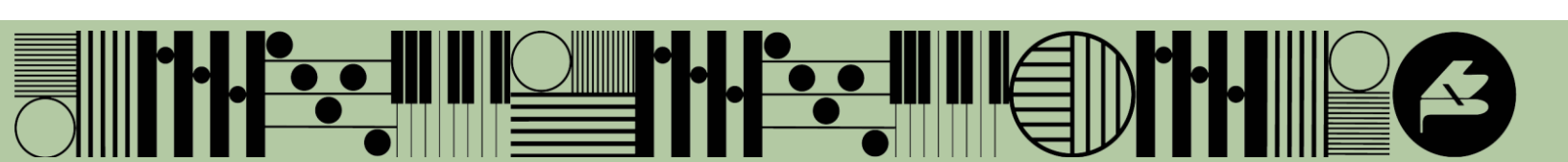
### Key Responsibilities:

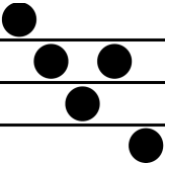
#### Strategic Leadership

- Collaborate with the Chair, Board, Artistic Advisors, and key stakeholders to develop a clear and ambitious future strategy and delivery plans that balance artistic ambition with community relevance on sustainable terms
- Expand HIP's profile, status and reach through sustainable partnerships with orchestras, education providers, and cultural organisations incorporating additional concerts, events, and programming initiatives
- Lead initiatives that broaden and deepen engagement with diverse audiences locally, nationally, and internationally,
- Champion equity, diversity, and inclusion across all areas of HIP's work and strategy.

#### Governance and Board Relations

- Support the Chair and Board in strong governance practices, ensuring transparency accountability and compliance.
- Provide accurate and comprehensive information to facilitate informed and timely decision-making.





## Financial and Resource Management

- Drive responsible financial planning, including budgeting, monitoring, and risk assessment, to safeguard HIP's sustainability.
- Contribute strategically to fundraising initiatives, working closely with the freelance fundraising lead, the Board, and key stakeholders to shape grant applications, donor cultivation, and partnership opportunities that diversify and grow income streams.

## Operational Excellence

- Oversee HIP's operational functions with a focus on efficiency, organisational culture, and staff wellbeing.
- Foster a collaborative and inclusive workplace that empowers all employees, volunteers, and artistic team members.

## Advocacy and Public Profile

- Serve as HIP's public ambassador, representing the organisation to the media, funders, cultural partners, and the international piano community.
- Enhance HIP's reputation through proactive communications and advocacy, positioning the organisation as a leader in piano competitions and music education and engagement.

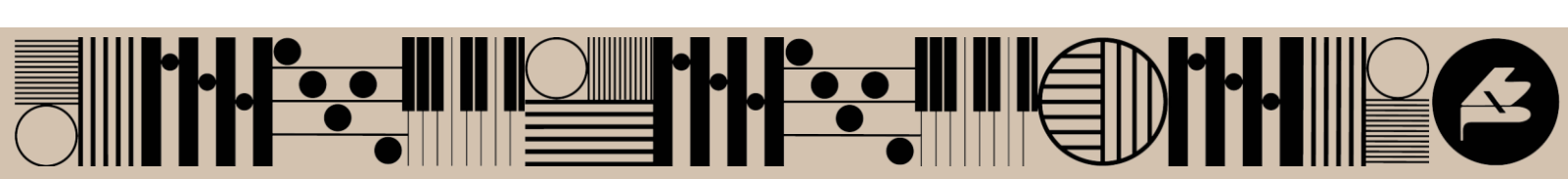
## Audience and Community Development

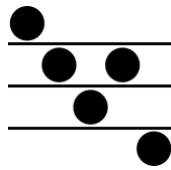
- Champion HIP's education, outreach, and community engagement programmes, strengthening the organisation's relevance and accessibility.
- Develop audience growth strategies that promote diversity and inclusion while enhancing participation in HIP events locally, nationally, and internationally.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Skills and Competencies

- Senior executive/leadership experience within the arts or cultural sector, ideally with a classical music organisation/institution.
- Proven track record in strategic planning, organisational development, and financial management.
- Experience and knowledge of the fundraising landscape, including public and private sector funding, philanthropy, and partnership development; ability to contribute strategically alongside specialist fundraising support.
- Strong communication skills with the ability to inspire confidence across a broad range of stakeholders, including the Board, artists, audiences, partners, and funders.





- First-hand board and governance experience; a collaborative and advisory approach to leadership.
- Demonstrable commitment to embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion in organisational culture, programming, and audience engagement.
- Ability to navigate complex stakeholder interests with resilience, creativity, and diplomacy.
- Strategic mindset with the capacity to identify growth opportunities.

### Personal Attributes

- Passion for classical music, with a genuine belief in its power to inspire and engage communities.
- Visionary yet pragmatic, able to combine ambition with careful risk management.
- Inclusive and empathetic leader who values teamwork and supports the development of a highly expert staff team.
- Adaptable and open-minded, embracing innovation while respecting HIP's heritage, reputation and contribution to place-shaping.
- High integrity, professionalism, and dedication to advancing HIP's mission and international profile.

### TERMS & CONDITIONS

- **Contract:** Permanent, part-time
- **Salary:** £70,000 – £80,000 (full-time equivalent), pro rata for a 4-day working week
- **Location:** Hastings with hybrid working
- **Probation Period:** Six months
- **Notice Period:** Six months
- **Pension:** Workplace pension scheme
- **Holiday:** 25 days plus bank holidays (FTE)

### HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please send a CV and a covering letter stating why you think you are suitable for this role to our recruitment consultant, Helen Sprott, Managing Director of AEM International at [applications@aeminternational.co.uk](mailto:applications@aeminternational.co.uk)

Letters should be no longer than two pages. All applications will be acknowledged. The deadline for applications is 5pm on Friday 23rd January 2026.

If you would like a confidential conversation about the role, please contact Helen via email at [hsprott@aeminternational.co.uk](mailto:hsprott@aeminternational.co.uk)

