

BBC
Philharmonic
Orchestra

Appointment of
Leader



1. Introduction / Message from the Director

The BBC Philharmonic Orchestra is the oldest radio orchestra in the world. Founded in 1922 as the ZZY orchestra, we have been broadcasting live music for over 100 years. It's what we do best, and 103 years later, we are still going strong.

Today, we begin the search for an inspiring and virtuosic artistic Leader to continue that mission: to work with the orchestra to shape some of the finest performances, broadcasts, and recordings in the world. It is a crucial position, with the potential to make a spectacular contribution to the work and lives of our musicians and team here at the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra

It's a time of real growth for us. In the last year, we've launched some major new partnerships, expanded our audiences, and delivered incredible projects. From five-star Mahler at the Bridgewater Hall to critically acclaimed CD recordings; from thrilling international tours to our TV series Musical Storyland (15 million streams and counting) – the orchestra is on brilliant form.

Most importantly, we have the best possible mandate from the BBC – to create inspiring, ambitious, and courageous artistic work, and to make a large-scale impact for our audiences with that work.

If you think you have what we need, we can't wait to meet you.

Good luck!

Adam Szabo
Orchestra Director

BBC Philharmonic Orchestra



2. Package Description

Contract type: Permanent, 0.4 FTE

Pay range: Subject to negotiation, commensurate with experience

Job Base: Philharmonic Studio, MediaCityUK, Salford

We will offer a competitive salary package that reflects internal benchmarking and external market research and 26 days holiday (1 of which is a corporation day). MyChoices, our flexible benefits scheme, allows you to build a package personal to you, including health cover, the option to buy or sell annual leave, gym membership, electric vehicles, cycle to work, plus discounted products and services via MyDeals.

3. Role Scope

The Leader will lead and inspire this wonderful orchestra, combining exceptional solo and orchestral violin playing with inspirational leadership, fostering a culture of musical excellence, collaboration and professionalism across the orchestra.

The orchestra employs two Leaders and the roles work closely together with the Chief Conductor, our guest artists, orchestral colleagues and management. The Leader is responsible for guiding the artistic and technical standards of the orchestra, supporting effective people management, and contributing fully to the wider life of the organisation. The role requires national and international travel, including touring, alongside regular evening and weekend commitments.

Main duties include:

- Lead the orchestra and the First Violin section in rehearsals, performances, recordings and broadcasts.
- Share leadership responsibilities with the other appointed Leaders and provide consistent artistic direction across the orchestra.
- Direct the orchestra, or specific sections, in rehearsal and performance as required.
- Work closely with the Chief Conductor to establish and maintain standards of style, intonation, balance, ensemble, rhythm and musical interpretation.
- Maintain the highest standards of professional violin playing, musical excellence and artistic integrity.
- With the management team, share the responsibility to model and support BBC policies & values including effective people management, development, diversity, inclusion and belonging.
- Prepare thoroughly for rehearsals and performances, including the study and preparation of all relevant orchestral and solo passages.
- Determine and prepare bowings as required to support consistency and artistic objectives.
- Act as an ambassador for the orchestra and the BBC in public engagements, educational activities and external events.
- Foster an environment in which artistic excellence, creativity and innovation can flourish.

4. Person Specification

Essential (must have)

- Exceptional professional orchestral and solo violin playing ability.
- Ability to maintain and inspire the highest levels of musical and artistic excellence.
- A commitment to the standards and priorities of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra.
- Ability to work collaboratively to inspire and lead performances that meet the highest musical standards, by providing artistic direction and by motivating members of the orchestra.
- Effective people and performance management skills, including the ability to give constructive feedback, deal with sensitive issues and to make important decisions.
- Good interpersonal skills and the ability to establish and develop harmonious working relationships with a diverse range of people.
- Ability to plan ahead in order to prepare parts, organise allocations and to make the best use of the resources available with awareness of health and safety issues.

BBC Values

- **AUDIENCES** are at the heart of everything that we do.
- **CREATIVITY** is the lifeblood of our organisation.
- **TRUST** is the foundation of the BBC – we are independent, impartial, and truthful.
- We **RESPECT** each other – we're kind, and we champion inclusivity.
- We are **ACCOUNTABLE** and deliver work of the highest quality.
- We are **ONE BBC** – we collaborate, learn, and grow together.



5. How to apply

Applicants who wish to apply should do so at www.musicalchairs.info and submit their c.v.

6. The process

1. **Monday 13 July** – Applications open
2. **Friday 7 August 9am** – Applications close
3. **Monday 10 August** – Candidates notified of results

Following assessment, shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a live audition. In addition, a shortlist of early career candidates will be invited to submit a recording to be assessed by the panel.

Unsuccessful candidates will be notified by email – please note we are unable to provide feedback on individual applications at this stage.

4. **Sunday 20 September** – Live auditions in Manchester
5. **Sunday 25 October** – Live auditions in Manchester

Date to be advised in 2027 – Live auditions for early career candidates who progress through shortlisting.

7. The process

Please refer to separate repertoire requirements.

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