

Hallé Orchestra

Associate Leader

(Full-time permanent)

Recruitment Information Pack

Contact details for this application

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1. The Role

The Hallé invites applications for the position of Associate Leader. The successful candidate will play a prominent role as No. 2 in the first violin section.

We are seeking an exceptional violinist with outstanding leadership qualities, combined with the flexibility, collegiality, and musical sensitivity required for collaborative section playing.

As Associate Leader, the successful candidate will play a key role in shaping the artistic identity and performance standards of both the first violin section and the orchestra as a whole, providing confident, supportive, and inspiring musical leadership. They will work closely with the Leaders, acting as a vital link between the front desk and the wider section. They will also have the opportunity and responsibility in leading the orchestra across various programmes selected in collaboration with the leaders and their schedules.

Strong communication and interpersonal skills are therefore essential, enabling them to foster a positive, collaborative, and high-performing working environment.

The role also includes preparing and marking orchestral parts for sessions they lead, supporting the Leaders in the organisation, development, and ongoing artistic growth of the first violin section, and contributing to educational initiatives such as the Advanced Orchestral String Programme (AOSP). The successful candidate will also be expected to participate in recruitment and audition panels and will also have opportunities to play-direct smaller ensembles of Hallé players in projects such as the orchestra's Relaxed Concert series.

As a member of the Hallé, you will perform a varied and stimulating repertoire, including major symphonic works under our newly appointed Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor, Kahchun Wong, innovative programmes with Thomas Adès, Principal Guest Conductor, and a wide range of popular and light-classical concerts conducted by Stephen Bell, Associate Conductor. You will also work with a number of distinguished guest conductors throughout the season. In addition to regular performances at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall and other leading international venues, the role offers further artistic opportunities, such as taking part in the Hallé's Chamber Series and Relaxed Concerts at our dedicated venue, Hallé St Peter's, and contributing to our award-winning education and outreach programme.

1.1 The contract

Under the orchestra's contract, players are guaranteed 430 sessions (or calls) annually, with work schedules published in quarterly itineraries. A typical session lasts no more than three hours. To support work-life balance, safeguards are in place to prevent overwork, including a maximum of two sessions per day, twelve per week, and a 'Free Day' structure that provides an equivalent of two free days per week, in addition to statutory holidays. By mutual agreement with the Orchestra Personnel Manager, up to 10% of sessions may be taken as unpaid leave. Members of the orchestra are entitled to 35 days of annual leave, with 28 days typically scheduled during the summer break.

1.2 Salary And Benefits

The salary for the Associate Leader is subject to negotiation. Additional benefits include a contributory pension scheme, health insurance, and instrument insurance provided by the Hallé for all orchestra members.

2. About the Hallé

Kahchun Wong, Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor

Sir Mark Elder, Conductor Emeritus

Thomas Adès, Principal Guest Conductor

Sir James MacMillan, Featured Composer

Leila Josefowicz and Jonny Greenwood, Featured Artists

In 1858, Sir Charles Hallé held a strong belief: music should be for everyone.

This simple idea turned into a wonderful gift when Hallé founded his groundbreaking orchestra right here in Manchester, bringing world-class music to people's doorsteps.

A lot has changed since then, but we're still committed to sharing Hallé's incredible gift with our great city and beyond. Every year, we change lives, connect communities and enrich the world around us. Together, through the power of music, we reach over 90,000 people in our community.

Our people

Many music legends have shaped us over the years: Hans Richter, Hamilton Harty, John Barbirolli ... to name a few. The baton passed to Kahchun Wong to start a new chapter in our history as Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor. Meanwhile, after almost 25 years as Music Director, Sir Mark Elder became our Conductor Emeritus at the end of the 2024/25 season.

Our players

At the heart of the Hallé, our players create the world-famous sound that moves audiences every day. These extraordinary artists come from across the globe, combining their talents as soloists, chamber musicians, educators and more. At their helm are our dynamic Leaders; the amazingly talented Roberto Ruisi and Emily Davis.





Our shared passion

Today, we're an orchestra of over 80 musicians, 500 singers across five choirs and a core team of more than 50 passionate music lovers. Together, we're dedicated to honouring Hallé's legacy and to leaving a lasting impact, long after the music stops. From the concert hall to the classroom, we continue to find new, relevant and exciting ways to share Hallé's gift of music with the world. And bring the joy, passion and beauty of music to people's lives everywhere.

How we do this

Our seasons have plenty to tempt listeners. From breathtaking classics and non-classical music to family performances and relaxed concerts, not to mention bold new works from some of the finest musical talent here and across the world. Every year, our community grows, shaped and connected by the joy, passion and beauty of music.

Where we do this

In Manchester, a city of incredible musical talent and diversity. We've been proud to call it home for almost 170 years. Originally starting out in Manchester's Free Trade Hall, we're now resident in the specially-built Bridgewater Hall – one of the world's greatest concert venues. Every year, we perform to audiences of more than 100,000 people.

We also have homes in Ancoats. There is Hallé St Peter's, where we rehearse, record and perform, and Hallé at St Michael's, a space for our other activities and community events.

Our world

As well as bringing world-class talent to Manchester, we also bring Manchester's talent to the world. We hold residencies in major UK cities and often perform at prestigious international festivals like the BBC Proms and the Edinburgh Festival. Not to mention touring overseas. We launched our own record label and regularly broadcast concerts online too. We've been busy winning awards while we're at it – including a 2022 South Bank Sky Arts Award.

halle.co.uk



2.1 The Orchestra

The Hallé Orchestra's players are among the finest in the world, representing 14 different nationalities and bringing their exceptional talent to Manchester. Many are also dedicated educators, teaching at institutions such as the Royal Northern College of Music, Chetham's School of Music, and other specialist conservatoires and schools across the UK. In addition to performing and teaching within the wider community, all players take part in the Hallé's UK and international concerts and play a vital role in our extensive education and outreach programme.

The Orchestra has 80 permanent posts (with some players employed on part-time contracts) and gives around 140 concerts and events each year.

Further information about the Orchestra and our performances is available at www.halle.co.uk

2.2 Diversity, Equity, Diversity Inclusion and Belonging

The Hallé Concerts Society is embedded in its city and aims to reflect the great diversity of Greater Manchester in all areas of its work: musicians, staff, Board participants and audiences.

Our ambition is to ensure that all employees and job applicants are given equal opportunity and that our organisation is representative of all sections of society. Each employee will be respected and valued and able to give their best as a result. We're committed to providing equality and fairness to all in our employment and not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality,

national origin, religion or belief, or sex and sexual orientation. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All employees, no matter whether they are part-time, full-time, or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect.

But simply having a diverse workforce is not enough. We want to build an inclusive environment, where everyone can develop to their full potential. We celebrate our differences and recognise the importance of teams reflecting the activities and communities they serve.

We support flexible working arrangements wherever possible and welcome conversations about how we can accommodate individual needs.

3. The Recruitment Process

At the Hallé, we are committed to fostering a vibrant and inclusive musical community that reflects the rich diversity of Greater Manchester and the wider society we serve. Our recruitment processes are designed to ensure that every stage of the hiring process is transparent, equitable, and accessible, enabling us to attract and appoint the most talented musicians from all backgrounds.

All applications will be reviewed through an anonymised process to ensure fairness. While we regret that we cannot invite every applicant to audition, all submissions will be carefully considered.

The Hallé Concerts Society welcomes applications from candidates of all backgrounds.

We are committed to making our recruitment process accessible to all candidates. Please let us know if you require any adjustments or support to take part in the application or interview process.

Application Process

All applications are to be made through the Musical Chairs website. www.musicalchairs.info/violin/jobs

There are four stages to the Hallé's Recruitment Process.

- Stage 1 Applications screened by the panel and management. Successful applicants are invited to attend Stages 2 or 3.
- Stage 2 Live audition
- Stage 3 Assessed Guest Work
- Stage 4 Trial

Based on pre-determined criteria, candidates at Stage 1 will progress to Stage 2 or 3 of the application process.

To progress from Stage 1 to Stage 2:

Candidates with professional experience in principal positions, ideally including substantial experience within first violin sections, will be considered for a live audition. Applications are also welcomed from musicians at an earlier stage of their career who have held principal roles in conservatoires or recognised youth orchestras. Candidates with significant achievements in solo or chamber music will likewise be considered.

Stage 2 Live auditions will be held in three rounds:

Round 1 will be screened

Round 2 will be unscreened

Round 3 will be an unscreened chamber music round with live open rehearsal

The three audition rounds will likely take place on different days.

Candidates who are successful at Stage 2 will progress to Stage 4.

Regrettably, we will be unable to offer auditions to all applicants, and the number of audition places will be limited.

To progress from Stage 1 to Stage 3:

Candidates who currently hold, or have previously held, a principal position in a professional orchestra of comparable international standing may, at the discretion of the panel, be invited to proceed directly to Stage 3. The panel may also, at its discretion, consider candidates with extensive freelance experience in front desk roles with other professional orchestras of comparable international standing and candidates with extensive experience as chamber musicians or as soloists.

Candidates who progress to Stage 3 will be invited for one assessed patch of work with the Hallé, usually no longer than one week in length. All candidates will also be required to undertake a live audition at a mutually convenient time during this week of assessed work.

Following the Assessed Guest Work and audition, successful candidates will progress to Stage 4.

3.1 Auditions

Audition requirements and further information on what to expect can be downloaded in a separate document from halle.co.uk and musicalchairs.com.

Auditions are scheduled to take place at Hallé St Peter's, Manchester, on one or more of the following dates: 15 16 and/or 17 September 2026. Final details will be confirmed with shortlisted candidates.

An accompanist will be provided, but candidates may bring their own if they wish.

Please be aware that Round 1, Round 2 and Round 3 auditions will likely take place on different days. Final details will be confirmed with shortlisted candidates.

Please note that the orchestra is unable to reimburse any travel, accommodation, or other expenses incurred in connection with the audition process.

3.2 Stage 4 (Trials)

Candidates who progress to Stage 4 (Trials) will be offered trial periods by the Orchestra Personnel Manager. During these periods, candidates will rehearse and perform with the orchestra, potentially across more than one engagement. As part of the process, the successful candidate will, at some point, have performed under the direction of the Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor, Kahchun Wong.

3.3 How To Apply

All applications should be made via the Musical Chairs website at www.musicalchairs.info/violin/jobs using the ATS system.

Application closing date: Fri 24 July 2026

Candidates notified of application outcomes: w/c 27 July 2026

4. Who To Contact?

For further information on this recruitment process, please contact:

Osian Dance, Orchestra Personnel Manager
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