



ULSTER ORCHESTRA

Let's Play



HEAD OF FINANCE & BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
APPLICATION DEADLINE: 20th July 2025

PRINCIPAL FUNDERS



Belfast City Council

What we do: We connect fantastic music and musicians to the people of Northern Ireland and beyond.

Who we are: 63 top class musicians led by Music Director Daniele Rustioni, acknowledged as one of the most compelling conductors of his generation. Together with our administrative team we are one of Northern Ireland's most cherished cultural organisations.

At the heart of our communities: Our musicians routinely devote time every week for community engagement; you can find us in care homes, hospitals and hospices, spreading solace and joy to patients and residents and our musicians also provide vital high-level support for talented youngsters.

Our philosophy: The best orchestras create great inspirational concerts and also draw from their communities, by reflecting their cultures, their hopes and dreams. They help their communities find their creative voices; that is what we are about.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Head of Finance & Business Management
Reporting To:	CEO
Type of Post:	Full-time, Permanent
Location:	Belfast, Northern Ireland

As a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT), the Head of Finance and Business Management is responsible for the business and financial operations of the Ulster Orchestra including financial strategy and well-being, fundraising, and day-to-day operations. At all times, the Head of Finance and Business Management must ensure that the CEO and Board are kept fully advised of current and projected financial positions, all financial implications and their possible ramifications.

The Head of Finance and Business Management will have direct line management responsibility for the Finance, Fundraising and Facilities teams.

Key Responsibilities

Financial Modelling & Analysis

- Understand key business drivers and use this knowledge along with economic and industry trends to inform financial forecasting
- Use financial modelling to create and produce annual budgets, future forecasts and cash projections using historical and projected data to include scenario analyses based on micro and macro factors
- Regularly update budgets, forecasts and cash projections during the financial year to inform financial and operational decisions contributing to the ongoing future development and financial sustainability of the Ulster Orchestra

- Assess and provide clear and in-depth analysis of monthly management and annual accounts, budgets and cash projections to provide regular updates regarding the Ulster Orchestra's current and projected financial performance.
- Identify key financial and non-financial risks, relaying this information to the CEO and SMT with recommended action plans to mitigate for agreement

Financial Management

- Oversee and assist in the preparation and checking of monthly management accounts as well as the annual audited accounts.
- Prepare and update the orchestra tax relief calculation alongside the monthly management accounts and re-forecasted budget for the current financial year as well as the final calculation for the annual audited accounts.
- Implement sound financial and administrative policies and procedures and internal controls for accounting, auditing, budgeting, accounts receivable and payable, payroll, pensions and auto enrolment.
- Direct activities relating to the management and control of cash, banking and investments within a continual environment of cash fluctuations
- Manage daily financial activities, including recording revenue and expenses, banking, creditor and debtor processing, record keeping and production of financial and cash flow statements.
- Direct the preparation and maintenance of property, equipment and instrument inventory records and depreciation schedules.
- Interpret financial information and proactively keep the CEO, Board and, where appropriate, other managers advised of the financial implications of repertoire and other concert or project proposals, player vacancies, illness, transactions, developments and indicators relating or pertaining to the UO, including amongst other things, matters arising from the actions of other managers, sponsors and/or hirers, interest and currency changes, and local and national government policy changes.
- Prepare financial reports for the Finance sub-committee and Board as required (typically every six weeks) and present these reports at Finance sub-committee and Board level.
- Recommend and monitor expense control initiatives.
- Develop and oversee the procurement function of the UO including the implementation of a purchase order system

Budgeting and Planning

- Work with the CEO and SMT to develop business and strategic plans for the orchestra, with particular emphasis on achieving financial and fundraising objectives.
- Prepare operating budgets and forecasts liaising with the CEO and SMT as required for approval by the CEO and the Board
- Monitor revenue and expenses against approved budgets, prepare analysis of variances and recommend revisions of the financial plan and budget.

- Prepare a reforecast budget and update monthly to monitor expected outturn for the financial year.
- Ensure stable cash flow management to guarantee ongoing financial viability.

Compliance Management

- Ensure the UO complies with all taxation requirements specified by law or regulation, including preparation and submission of tax forms, tax and VAT records, reports, payments and Charity Commission filings.
- Prepare, maintain, and submit as required, all accounting records, financial records and statistical reports in a timely manner.
- Organise and prepare for audit and work with auditors in preparation of the annual audited financial statements. Respond to and acting upon auditor's management report and recommendations in consultation with the Board.
- Develop internal audit procedures to ensure that all systems function as planned.
- Ensure compliance with all financial/tax reporting requirements of trusts.

Fundraising

- Oversee and contribute to the fundraising strategy of the UO and lead/assist on funding applications for public funding, trusts and foundations and corporate proposals. This will be conducted in collaboration with the Development Manager, external fundraising consultants, the Head of Marketing and Corporate Partnerships and the Head of Community Engagement and Grants and their respective teams.
- Prepare and/or review the submission of reports relating to funding arrangements as required by DfC, ACNI, Belfast City Council, BBC, local authorities and trust and foundations.
- Review all sponsorship proposals and contracts for financial viability and checking purposes.
- Track progress of fundraising function against fundraising targets, and monitor progress, difficulties, opportunities, risks, providing support where needed.
- Liaise and direct the fundraising team about the agenda and structure of the fundraising meetings.
- Being present at and contributing to conversations with potential funders when required.
- Contributing to applications and proposals which are significant in quantity and/or strategic importance including but not limited to the UO's core funders (ACNI, BCC), capital applications, local government, new/existing sponsors and other large trusts and foundations, ensuring deadlines are met, applications are prepared in accordance with strategy, and that they are proof-read before submission.
- Identify and source fundraising opportunities where there are pathways to obtain funding.

Relationship Management

- Develop and maintain proactive and constructive relationships with internal stakeholders and staff.
- Participate in meetings where necessary with stakeholders and assist to resolve stakeholder issues.
- Take an active role in negotiations and consultations with the Musicians Union as required with regard to all union matters.
- Attend, present and actively contribute to Board meetings and relevant Sub-Committee meetings such as Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Player Management Committee and Health & Safety Committee.
- Provide management and leadership to the finance team, fundraising team and facilities team, promoting and supporting effective team working through good communication and regular team meetings and 1-1s.

Commercial

- As part of SMT, contribute to identify opportunities for venue hire to support income growth and diversification.
- Reviewing contracts and legal documents, in liaison with solicitors as and when required.
- Assist the CEO on special projects as and when required.
- Working as part of the senior team on development of the Ulster Orchestra's new home at Townsend Street. This will include the financial management of the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant received by the UO to support the redevelopment.
- Lead on managing lease agreements for external tenants renting studio space at Townsend.
- Advise on, review and approve all other commercial activity of the UO to ensure financial viability, including but not limited to box office ticket pricing and seating bands, commercial hires of the Orchestra and spaces at Townsend including recording activity.
- Review all artist/performer contracts to ensure that they comply with tax laws, have adequate insurance endorsements and are not at variance with the UO's objectives.

Facilities

- Oversee the Townsend Facilities function, providing line-management to the Facilities Manager as required.
- Review and approve any facilities-related expenditure within budget.

Administration

- Co-ordinate the administration of all operating leases and contracts, including IT services, insurance renewals, maintenance contracts and other services.
- Direct and oversee payroll functions.

- Provide financial information for marketing reports.
- Monitor purchasing policies and procedures.
- Direct the information systems function to increase workflow efficiency, software and hardware requirements, developing appropriate controls and new systems installations.
- Maintain insurance records.

PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

Essential

- Degree-level qualification in Finance, Accounting or a related field OR another appropriate route to a full accountancy qualification (such as an accounting technicians' qualification)
- A full CIMA, ACA, or ACCA accountancy qualification and a current member of a professional body such as Chartered Accountants Ireland, ACCA CIMA etc.
- Minimum 5 years commercial accountancy experience at a senior/management level
- A proven track record of setting and managing budgets and cash fluctuations including the ability to perform scenario-based modelling
- Experience of managing projects, people and teams.
- Experience working on multiple projects at the same time and cross-departmentally, with the ability to prioritise and effectively manage workload in a fast-paced and pressurised environment. NB. This may require working outside normal working hours when needed to meet deadlines
- Experience in negotiating and track record of achieving mutually beneficial outcomes
- Attention to detail and accuracy combined with the ability to analyse and interpret financial information and apply forecast implications
- Strong communication and presentation skills
- Strong IT skills – Microsoft Office Suite and in particular Advanced Excel and accounting systems such as Sage etc.
- Ability to plan and think strategically with a long-term focus, and achieve service delivery objectives within the strategic guidelines
- Ability to establish credibility as a manager, to lead, communicate expectations, and influence others to achieve buy-in to ideas
- Partnership approach to other managers, demonstrating a consultative and inclusive management style

Desirable

- Experience of working in the Arts sector or charitable sector
- Detailed understanding of charity SORP accounting and FRS102 accounting principles
- Fundraising knowledge/experience

- Experience of managing external stakeholder relationships
- Experience of working with Trade Unions
- Experience of working on a capital project, including funding applications, reviewing legal documents, producing tender documents, liaising with project managers
- Experience of working on a National Lottery Heritage Funding application and delivery

OTHER

If appointed, you will be required to apply for an Enhanced Check through [AccessNI](#), in order to participate in work activities with children and/or adults at risk. If you foresee any potential issues with this, please email: careers@ulsterorchestra.com.

NB. By virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (exceptions) Order (NI) 1979 and because of the nature of the work for which you are applying this post is exempt from the provisions of Article 5 of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978. Accordingly, you are not entitled to withhold information about convictions, which would otherwise be considered as 'spent' under the provisions of the 1978 Order. Failure to disclose such information could result in dismissal or disciplinary action in the event of employment.

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE AND HOW TO APPLY

Application Form

Complete the Statement of Suitability which you can download from the website and send it along with your Curriculum Vitae to careers@ulsterorchestra.com by the stated closing date. **No applications will be accepted after the stated closing date.**

Monitoring Information

To finalise your application, you will be required to complete our Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form and email it to careers@ulsterorchestra.com. This provides us with important information to support our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy.

SELECTION PROCESS

Shortlisting

All applications received by the closing date will be shortlisted against the essential criteria. In the event that a large number of applications are received, desirable criteria may also need to be used to shortlist.

Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend for interview. We are planning to conduct interviews for this position week commencing **28th July 2025**.

JOB OFFER

Successful candidates will be given a job offer, which will be subject to a 12-month probationary period and satisfactory background checks.

OUR HISTORY

Music Director Laureate **Daniele Rustioni**
 Honorary Principal Guest Conductor **Jac van Steen**
 Conductor Laureate **Rafael Payare**
 Artist Laureate **Sir James Galway**

Leader **Ioana Petcu-Colan**

Founded in 1966, the Ulster Orchestra has been at the forefront of musical life in Northern Ireland and the Orchestra's full-time musicians form the region's only professional symphony orchestra.

In 2019, the Ulster Orchestra appointed Daniele Rustioni as its Chief Conductor, a role which commenced at the start of the Orchestra's 2019/20 Season, and in 2022/23, in recognition of the strength of the relationship, he was appointed the Orchestra's Music Director. Rustioni's tenure ended with the 2023/24 season, and he joins a distinguished line of past principal conductors including Bryden Thomson, Vernon Handley, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Thierry Fischer, Kenneth Montgomery, JoAnn Faletta and, most recently, Rafael Payare.

With a mission to enrich the lives of people living in Northern Ireland, those visiting, and those who encounter it through international touring and regular radio and TV broadcasts with both BBC Northern Ireland and BBC Radio 3, the Orchestra strives for excellence in all it undertakes, be it regular concert performances, learning and community engagement programmes, or creative collaborations across the arts.

The Ulster Orchestra gives around 40 evening and lunchtime concerts each season in its home, the Ulster Hall, and in Belfast Waterfront. The Orchestra performs for the BBC Radio 3 invitational concert series at the Ulster Hall and in front of tens of thousands for the BBC's Proms in the Park celebrations each year. The Orchestra appears regularly at the main BBC Proms series in the Royal Albert Hall, and its 2022 appearance with Daniele Rustioni and Louise Alder received widespread excellent reviews, including a 5 star review in The Guardian:

"The qualities that characterise [Rustioni's] work in the theatre – flair, intelligence, an immaculate sense of pace, tension and drama – also very much formed the basis of an exceptional concert that found him and his orchestra on terrific form."

(Tim Ashley, The Guardian)

An important aspect of the Ulster Orchestra's work across Northern Ireland is its annual touring programme of concerts, which brings live orchestral music to the heart of communities across the region. A new initiative for the Orchestra, *Ulster Orchestra On Your Doorstep*, was founded in the 2016/17 Season (the Orchestra's 50th Anniversary Season) and it sees the orchestra play in as diverse a range of venues as possible across Northern Ireland, sending everything from small ensembles and chamber music concerts, right up to the full symphony orchestra, far and wide across the region. In addition to our local tours, we also travelled to Linz, Austria in 2022 for a performance at the renowned Brucknerhaus Concert Hall.

The Orchestra performs with a number of regular partners, including Northern Ireland Opera, Belfast International Arts Festival and Belfast Philharmonic Choir. A new partnership for the

Ulster Orchestra was established in 2016 with the club night Lush!, and the ensuing arena event Lush! Classical has been a sell-out event for four consecutive years.

The Ulster Orchestra records regularly for labels such as Hyperion (with Howard Shelley), Naxos (with former Chief Conductor JoAnn Falletta), Chandos, SOMM and Toccata Classics. The Orchestra's most recent recording of Weill's Violin Concerto and Second Symphony on SOMM records continues to garner international critical acclaim since its release early in 2022. Through partnering with organisations such as NI Screen, the Orchestra has undertaken various recording activities for film and TV, including the internationally-renowned children's series 'Puffin Rock'.

The Ulster Orchestra's Learning and Community Engagement programme aims to connect the Orchestra with communities and individuals across Northern Ireland and to provide accessible and innovative opportunities for people to engage as audiences and participants. Since 2016, all the Orchestra's musicians have been working on education and outreach activity, including Relaxed Performances for people with additional needs, residencies in schools and universities, concerts directly in people's communities, mentoring and coaching for players at all stages of their musical journey and the Crescendo project, the Orchestra's community-led residency project for children from disadvantaged areas in North and West Belfast. We have a long list of organisations that we work with, including Age NI, Autism NI, the Now Group, the Alzheimer's Society, the Belfast Trust Arts in Health programme, Community Arts Partnership, the Flax Trust, and Women's Aid.

Salon Sessions is an exciting new online project which takes small ensembles from the orchestra to unique and wonderful spaces. It also fulfils our passion to collaborate with and support local artists, offering them a platform to showcase their talents and what Belfast has to offer across the world. Each artist has their songs or poems arranged and performed by a variety of small ensembles of Ulster Orchestra musicians, recorded and filmed in inspiring, quirky, innovative locations culminating in a twenty minute professionally produced online 'session'. These are free to view by the public via the Orchestra's YouTube channel. To date, we have successfully collaborated with several artists including Ryan McMullan, Colum Sands, Niamh Dunne, Jordan Adetunji and our wonderful 'Your Song Now' project resulted in a successful album, *Our Songs, Our Place*, featuring original songs by nine local artists.

Thanks to everyone in the Ulster Orchestra family, we hold a unique place in the hearts of Northern Ireland's people and we share a commitment to maintain and grow that success in the future.



OUR VALUES

We hold our values dear – they are unique and authentic to us as they were co-created through a collaborative process of lively debate and discussion – just how we like to do things here!

We CARE about our colleagues

- We treat each other with dignity and respect
- We encourage, support and value each other
- We are one team and share a collective responsibility
- We build trust through constructive communication
- We are innovative, resilient and resourceful

We COMMIT to being world class

- We are dedicated to the highest level of quality and performance
- We are proud of our collective talents
- We are aspirational, ambitious, creative and progressive
- We are advocates and ambassadors for music and the arts
- We are honoured to be the orchestra of Northern Ireland on the world stage

We ENGAGE with our community

- We reach out to, work with and connect people
- We provide inspirational musical experiences that are accessible to all
- We are proud to be instilled in, relevant to and valued by the community
- We present learning and life enrichment opportunities for people of all ages
- We value this country's rich artistic heritage and the part we continue to play in its future

These values underpin everything we do, and you will see them running through all of our company policies and procedures. Life at Ulster Orchestra is varied, meaningful and enriching - our employees live the values because they are as important to them as they are to our company. Aligned to our values, we have a comprehensive Dignity at Work policy, which you can download from the Our Values section of our website.

OUR BENEFITS

Working in the arts and creative industries is a wonderful experience, and the UO is in the enviable position of being able to offer the security of a permanent employment to over 80 creatives.

We are pleased to be able to offer much more than your salary in terms of benefits. We have highlighted just a few of them below.

Family Friendly Policies

We aim to ensure that every employee feels supported and encouraged to have a healthy balance between work and home commitments.

School run, or early morning parkrun? No problem! Admin staff can agree **flexible start/finish times** with their Line Manager, to help with that work-life balance, so there's no need for breakfast clubs, and you can even get your daily exercise out of the way before work. We also offer **Hybrid Working**, so you can enjoy the benefits of both home and office-based working, in agreement with your Line Manager.

We also have a strong **Flexible Working Policy**, whereby employees can request reduced working hours and job share contracts etc.

Our policies for **Maternity, Paternity, Adoption Leave & Shared Parental Leave** are generous and supportive, aimed at helping employees to balance their work and home life commitments, encouraging the retention of talent and experience, increasing well-being and thus reducing absence and stress.

We offer a **Career Break** policy after 3 years of service, to assist with work-life balance, e.g. To take time off for caring responsibilities, to go back to college, to go travelling and/or to accompany a partner on an overseas assignment.

Health & Wellbeing

We have a comprehensive **Wellbeing Policy** through which we aim to help our employees to stay fit and healthy and support them when they are ill.

Our **Health Cash Plan** is immediately available to all new joiners, and provides cash back to cover costs such as dental and optical bills, physiotherapy and consultancy charges. It also provides access to a 24-7 helpline, virtual GPs and an online discount platform.

We have regular scheduled visits from a registered **Physiotherapist**, and all employees have the opportunity to book an appointment if needed. We also run free functional movement classes open to all employees.

All employees have regular access to a **BAPAM registered GP**, who is available to provide and referrals for any medical concerns.

We offer a **Cycle to Work** scheme to all employees, enabling you to save at least 25% of the cost of a new bike and spreading the cost over a 12-month period. Not only good for the environment, but also helps you to stay fit and healthy by getting on your bike.

Holidays

Admin staff have 5 weeks paid holidays throughout the year in addition to 12 public holidays. We are a company that understands the value of time away from the workplace so we encourage holidays to be embraced.

Induction

Upon joining the UO, all employees have a structured and comprehensive induction, to ensure all new joiners receive a consistent and positive experience and feel welcome, included and supported, from the point of job offer to the end of their probationary period.

Learning and Development

We believe in the importance of continuous learning and development and invest to support the growth and progression of our employees. This might be in the form of individual, confidential one to one coaching or group training sessions covering topics such as Resilience, Communications, Leadership etc. We also encourage personal and professional development through internal secondments and acting up opportunities as well as support towards relevant further academic and skills development programmes.

Loyalty Awards

We are delighted to have low turnover of our people, with the average length of service being 15 years. We thank our employees for their loyalty, by providing loyalty awards at various long service milestones.

Pensions

All employees are automatically enrolled into our company pension scheme, and will benefit from our generous employer contributions (currently 6% p.a.). As we comply with government legislation regarding pensions, employees also currently contribute 2% p.a. All employees have access to the Orchestra's pension advisor for advice on their pension requirements.

LIVING HERE

Those of you who live here already will know that Northern Ireland offers a high quality of life. Small enough to get around easily (you can cross Northern Ireland by car in about 2 hours) but big enough to offer a great way of life and an amazing variety of experiences and activities. For those of you thinking about relocating, there are lots of brilliant reasons to consider living here.

People here are renowned as friendly and welcoming. Recent research conducted by Lloyds Banking Group for its annual Happiness Index in June 2020 placed Northern Ireland as the happiest place to live in the UK, with contentment levels here having increased by 6% on the previous year.

Northern Ireland has three airports (two of which are in the Greater Belfast area) with regular direct flights to the UK and Europe, and it is 2 hours by road or rail from Belfast to Dublin. Public transport is efficient and there is little congestion.

Northern Ireland offers a top-notch environment for living. In line with the rest of the UK, there is reasonable personal taxation, an excellent education system, a world-class healthcare system which is free and accessible to all and affordable properties.

More than 1100 international companies currently operate in Northern Ireland, including major US companies like Microsoft, AllState and Seagate, with IT a major industry sector. These companies have done their own research on living and working here, and it paints a clear picture of the benefits. Belfast is one of the most cost-effective cities in Western Europe to live in and TechNation research reports that Belfast is the best place to come to work as a software developer. The city ranked 2nd in the UK (behind London) and 9th overall in the Top 25 Tech Cities of the Future 2020/21, according to Global Outlook Tech Cities of the Future.

Property prices in Northern Ireland remain well below those in other UK locations and in the Republic of Ireland - around 75% lower than they are in London and 60% lower than Dublin. The majority of people living in Belfast and the surrounding area prefer to buy property rather than rent, and prices mean this is well within reach. Northern Ireland has reported the second-lowest crime rate in the UK for 2020 out of 43 nationwide police forces. As the top region with the lowest overall crime rate is the City of London (classed as a commercial area), this means Northern Ireland has the lowest residential crime rate in the UK.

For anyone thinking of relocating with a family, you'll be pleased to know that Northern Ireland is the top region in the UK for educational attainment, consistently coming out top at GCSE and A-Level exam level (the latter is equivalent to the US High School Diploma, the Republic of Ireland's Leaving Certificate and Scotland's Higher exams) and in 2019, 84.8% of Northern Ireland students achieved the three top grades at A-Level, compared to 75.8% in the rest of the UK.

Northern Ireland is developing as a progressive society, becoming ever-more multi-cultural and diverse. There are many organisations and networks whose remit is to support people from particular cultural backgrounds and minority groups – we can direct you to the relevant people if this would help you to settle in to life here.

If you're wondering about your leisure time, there is plenty to fill in your out-of-work hours. Northern Ireland's scenery is spectacular and between mountains and dramatic coastlines, you're spoilt for choice when it comes to locations for outdoor activities from hiking to

watersports such as paddle-boarding and fishing - or even just a spectacular drive along the Antrim Coast. The food and restaurant scene is of international quality and - besides Ulster Orchestra concerts - there are so many arts and cultural events and festivals, from pub backroom traditional sessions to international touring stars, you're bound to find something to appeal to your tastes.

For more information about the life and work of the Ulster Orchestra, visit <http://www.ulsterorchestra.org.uk>

