

Britten Sinfonia

Tutti First Violin Auditions 2026



Introduction from Meurig Bowen, CEO and Artistic Director

Thank you for your interest in this position. Britten Sinfonia came into being in the early '90s and continues to be a distinctive and much-admired presence in the UK's orchestral scene (we were recently listed in the Daily Telegraph's Top Ten UK Orchestras ranking). We aim to create impactful and meaningful musical experiences through both our varied performance schedule and our Learning & Participation programme. Alongside working with established, acclaimed collaborators, nurturing and celebrating the work of younger, emerging artists is important to us. New music has always been baked into our identity too: our musicians have now premiered nearly 300 works over three decades.

Britten Sinfonia's repertoire and range of projects are extraordinarily broad. To give a sense of this, recent work ranges from tours with the Will Gregory Moog Ensemble and Jacob Collier/Chris Thile to a concert with Anoushka Shankar at the Brighton Festival; a Hyperion recording of Bach's keyboard concertos with Mahan Esfahani; a Mendelssohn *Octet* performance at Cheltenham Music Festival; Mozart, Pärt and Higgins in a Bristol Beacon BBC Prom/Snape Maltings pairing, and filmed concerts of Tavener's *The Protecting Veil* with Guy Johnston. 2026 highlights include tours with folk duo Stevens & Pound and Max Baillie's ZRI Quintet, a triple bill of chamber operas at the ROH's Linbury Theatre, four concerts at Snape Maltings, and a James MacMillan premiere with The Sixteen in Rome. Our 12-strong management team is as experienced and committed to excellence as our wonderful players are.

The Role

The newly appointed Tutti First Violin will join our team of Member Players. This is a freelance position and member players receive a Forward Schedule of anticipated work to enable advance planning. It is expected that Member Players have a reliable regular presence and undertake the majority of work offered to them. Britten Sinfonia also has a very active Learning and Participation department, who are keen for Member Players to be involved in the various programmes run in the areas of composer development, schools and family participation, and wellbeing and health.

All Tutti First Violins rotate seating from project to project, including up to co-leader when necessary.

Audition Process

Britten Sinfonia is signed up to and gradually adopting the requirements of the *10-Point Plan for Hiring and Recruitment in UK Orchestras*, drawn up by the ABO, Black Lives in Music and the Musician's Union, to encourage fair recruitment in the orchestral sector. As such, all applications will be anonymised, and First Round auditions will be screened. No candidates will be put to trial without having auditioned.

In-person auditions will take place on 11 and 14 February 2026. Candidates who are unable to make either of these dates are still invited to submit an online application. We cannot guarantee that an audition will be offered to anyone who cannot attend either audition day, but if the panel feel that they would like to hear further candidates following 14 February, a further day may be scheduled.

Online Application

Applicants should complete both the online portfolio, and record and upload excerpts to Musical Chairs' audition platform. The panel will consider all audiovisual submissions (the panel will hear audio only) but will not see your online portfolio.

We want to make this process as accessible as possible for all potential applicants. Our strong preference is for you to complete both the online portfolio and audiovisual application. However, if for any reason this isn't possible, please still complete the online portfolio. Applicants who demonstrate a significant level of professional experience based on pre-determined criteria may still be invited for a screened First Round audition, if there are audition slots remaining after the panel have considered all audiovisual submissions. This will be at the discretion of Britten Sinfonia management.

The deadline for submission of the online application is 23:59 GMT on 16 January 2026.

In-Person Audition (First/Second Round)

Following the online application, selected candidates will be invited to attend a live, screened First Round audition at Peregrine's Pianos, London, on one of the following dates in February 2026:

- Wednesday 11 February
- Saturday 14 February

First Round auditions will take place in the morning of either of these dates.

At lunchtime on each of these days, once all First Round candidates for the day have been heard, the panel will invite a selection of candidates back for a Second Round audition, which will happen that afternoon. Therefore, candidates should keep both morning and afternoon available.

Second Round auditions will comprise of solo repertoire performed with an accompanist. More information is available on the required repertoire list. An accompanist will be provided for you, and you are expected to provide sheet music. The Second Round will not be screened.

Trial

Following the Second Round, selected candidates will be invited to trial with the orchestra.

Online Submission Guidelines

Filming/recording conditions

- Although submissions will be audiovisual, the panel will hear audio only. Visuals will not be seen by the panel and used only by Britten Sinfonia administration to verify reliability and identity of submissions.
- Please do not speak at any point during the recording.
- Submissions must be unaccompanied.
- Please have one single camera shot, which is preferably full length
- Video must not be edited and should be recorded in one continuous take.
- **Your audition video must be recorded using a smart phone. (no external microphones)**
- When recording your audition video, please try to use a room that has privacy, very little or no background noise.

We understand that home recording situations vary, and the panel will bear this in mind.

The maximum upload size on Musical Chairs is 5GB. Should you have any problems uploading your video, please contact jobs@musicalchairs.info.

For any other questions or queries, please contact phoebe.snook@brittensinfonia.com. Please do not email regarding First Round audition scheduling. Candidates invited to audition will be contacted separately to arrange an audition time.

If you have any access requirements or need any other adjustments to take part in this audition process, we encourage you to get in touch with us in advance. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever possible and will do our best to accommodate individual needs. To discuss access or request support, please contact phoebe.snook@brittensinfonia.com.