

Non-Executive Director Role Description

Overview

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Non-Executive Director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO).

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's mission is to enrich lives through orchestral experiences that are uncompromising in their excellence and inclusive in their appeal. Performing approximately 200 concerts, national and internationally, each season and embracing an enormously broad repertoire, the Orchestra reaches a global live and online audience of more than 60 million people. It has an extensive Community and Education programme working in communities, care settings, prisons and schools which is central to its charitable objectives.

The RPO is committed to an inclusive culture, where a diverse range of voices inform the Orchestra's business plan. Individuals are encouraged to bring their unique skills and contributions to realise our mission of providing world-class orchestral experiences for everyone, guided by our vision and values.

About the RPO

Passion, versatility and uncompromising artistic standards are the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's hallmarks. The RPO prides itself on being one of the world's most open-minded, forward-thinking and accessible symphony orchestras. Whilst artistic integrity remains paramount, the Orchestra is unafraid to push boundaries and is equally at home recording video game, film and television soundtracks and working with pop stars, as it is performing the great symphonic repertoire.

With Vasily Petrenko as its Music Director (appointed in 2018), the Orchestra collaborates with the most inspiring artists, including Joe Hisaishi who was appointed Composer-in-Association in April 2024. The RPO is a respected cultural ambassador for the UK and is proud to have HM King Charles III as its Patron. The Orchestra enjoys a busy schedule of international touring, performing in the world's great concert halls and at prestigious festivals. It promotes an annual season of concerts at London's Royal Albert Hall (where the RPO is Associate Orchestra), the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall and Cadogan Hall, where it is celebrating its 20th Season as Resident Orchestra. In addition, the Orchestra promotes over 40 concerts each season at partnership venues across the country, several of which are in areas where access to live orchestral music is limited.



The RPO's partnership with the property developer Quintain will see it relocate its headquarters to Wembley Park in 2025, building on what is already a long-standing relationship with the London Borough of Brent. This move will create an exciting opportunity for the RPO to genuinely enrich the community in Brent through a combination of performance, community engagement and education activity.

The RPO aims to place orchestral music at the heart of society, collaborating with creative partners to foster a deeper engagement with communities to make live orchestral music accessible to an inclusive and diverse audience. With this in mind in 1993 the Orchestra launched RPO Resound, which has grown to become the most innovative and respected orchestral community and education programme in the UK and internationally. The programme delivers bespoke, pioneering education, community, health and talent development projects to a wide range of participant groups, including homeless people, stroke survivors, children and young people, always aiming to enhance society's cultural fabric, positively impact individual lives and leave a lasting legacy.

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was founded by Sir Thomas Beecham in 1946; his mission was to lead a revival of UK orchestras after World War II and form an ensemble that comprised the finest musicians in the country. The RPO is a self-governed, freelance membership orchestra with each musician acquiring annually a vote to elect seven of their musician colleagues onto the Board of Directors, joining five non-Executive Directors and the Managing Director. The Board members bring a diverse range of skills and knowledge to help govern the Orchestra and its strategic planning.

Mission

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's mission is to enrich lives through orchestral experiences that are uncompromising in their excellence and inclusive in their appeal.

Vision

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra aspires to:

- be an orchestra for the modern world, unafraid to push boundaries
- place orchestral music at the heart of contemporary society, deepening engagement with communities and creative partners
- be a respected cultural ambassador locally, nationally and internationally

Values

- Excellence – we strive to achieve ambitious goals across our organisation
- Collaboration – in partnership, we achieve more together
- Inclusivity – great orchestral experiences must be accessible to all
- Resilience – our versatility is key to our success
- Responsibility – the talents of our musicians must be used for the benefit of everyone
- Passion – the driving force within the RPO



RPO Resound Projects

Responsibilities

- Provide high level oversight on all matters that come before the Board, ensuring the RPO Business Plan is developed, reviewed and monitored. Review and approve budgets, management accounts and statutory accounts
- Hold the management team to account to ensure progress against strategic aims, specifically as an Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) and the agreed ACE Activities and Investment Principles
- Ensure compliance, transparency and accountability in line with governing documents, and legal obligations. Oversight of reporting to regulators and funders and approval of organisation-wide policies
- Ensure good governance, monitoring risk areas, and protecting and developing the reputation and brand of the RPO
- Review senior management remuneration and undertake the recruitment of the MD as required
- Board succession planning
- Introduce professional, political, fundraising and community networks
- Attend RPO performances and events, acting as an ambassador for the RPO and developing, setting and upholding its mission, vision and values.

Person Specification

Previous experience of sitting on a Board isn't necessary, each Board member is given a comprehensive induction to the organisation and the responsibilities the role entails, with training offered as appropriate. It is hoped that prospective candidates will have professional experience that includes one or more of the following areas:

- **Fundraising knowledge**

The current funding landscape in which the RPO operates is becoming increasingly reliant on philanthropic income generation and within the RPO's business model there is a growing reliance on fundraising

- **Property Development experience**

With the imminent move of the administration offices to Wembley Park and the possibility of developing a rehearsal / recording studio for the Orchestra, professional knowledge of buildings and capital projects would be advantageous

- **HR experience (including Health and Wellbeing)**

The Board recognises that the RPO's most valuable resource is its people, both musicians and staff, therefore the need to properly support personnel to ensure wellbeing and personal development opportunities is paramount

- **Digital and Technology knowledge**

As the RPO's digital footprint evolves and technological opportunities develop for tickets sales, recordings, streaming and social media, this knowledge is increasingly relevant to the board

- **Equity, Diversity & Inclusion awareness**

The RPO Board recognises the challenges that the orchestral sector faces in becoming more inclusive and representative. The RPO is committed to creating an inclusive environment for its members, staff and patrons, and wishes to play a leading role in establishing a diverse orchestral future where everyone is welcome.

Key Information

- **Time commitment**

RPO Board meetings take place quarterly and there is an Annual General Meeting (usually in November or December), which all Board members are encouraged to attend. There are sub-committees of the Board and various working groups which NEDs are asked to join. These are normally directly related to an NED's professional background and/or interests. Board members are encouraged to attend RPO performances and events.

- **Meeting Location**

Board meetings are held in person at a location in Central London; however, it is possible for Board members to join meetings remotely using digital technologies. The AGM is held at a London location.

- **Remuneration**

RPO Non-Executive Director roles do not receive any financial remuneration. Reasonable travel expenses may be claimed when agreed in advance. The RPO encourages sustainable travel options.

- **Board terms**

The period of appointment for Non-Executive Directors is five years, and a maximum of two terms may be served.

Next Steps

The recruitment process will take place during January and February 2025 and it is hoped the new NEDs will be in post by Easter 2025. If, having read the role description you are interested in discussing the opportunity, or if you have any questions please contact Sarah Bardwell, Managing Director, on 07999 949536 or by emailing sarah.bardwell@rpo.co.uk.

To apply for this role please send a CV and a short covering letter outlining your interest in the RPO to Ann Firth, at FirthA@rpo.co.uk.



Vasily Petrenko conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall