



RSCM  
Youth Choir



**RSCM Youth Choir – Director  
Information Pack – February 2025**

## Introduction from Hugh Morris, RSCM's Director

Thank you for taking an interest in this important role.

You may or may not know much about the RSCM and its work. Very often, I find that people have an understanding which is not quite up to speed with our current priorities and work, and I would encourage you to take time to explore our website.

In summary, the RSCM is an independent UK charity dedicated to enabling the flourishing of church music. We provide relevant education, training and resources to our members and to the wider church in countries all around the world.

Fundamentally, we do three things:

1. Encourage the development of church music and musicians, through a comprehensive programme of education
2. Bring people closer to God through music, through the provision of high quality and relevant support and resource
3. Promote music in worship, and excellence in music, through advocacy and engagement in the wider world

Education is a central part of the RSCM's work, and how we deliver our Mission. Our recently revised [Education Strategy](#) provides a clear summary of this.

For the RSCM, with an increased focus in recent years on supporting young people and engaging with them to foster a lifelong love of singing and particularly in church, the Youth Choir is a really important beacon in showing the myriad ways in which music making of this kind not only makes a significant impact on the worshipping life of the church, but also on the individuals who are a part of it.

If you are inspired and encouraged by the mission of the RSCM, then I very much hope you will consider applying for this exciting role; we look forward to hearing from you.



Hugh Morris  
RSCM Director



## The task in outline

The principal task of the Youth Choir Director is to lead the activity of the choir during its residential events.

There are normally two residential events – one around Easter, and one during the summer holiday period – lasting no more than eight days in total. Typically, there are either two courses each of four days, or a weekend at Easter and a six-day course during the summer. We will agree the core commitments and dates at the start of each academic year.

Ongoing planning, preparation and meetings are expected to occupy an average of an hour per week throughout the year. This will vary during the year, with hours expected to concentrate in the lead up to residential events.

The Youth Choir Director contract is offered on a contract-for-services basis, with the successful candidate remaining responsible for their own tax and National Insurance. Authorised expenses incurred within the UK would be reimbursed in line with the RSCM's expenses policy. The contract will be offered to the successful candidate for an initial twelve-month period from September 2025, with the intention of extending for a further two years.

The fee available for the contract (based on two residential courses and ongoing planning as outlined above) will be up to £3700. Additional activities (such as directing the choir at additional events and auditioning prospective members) would attract additional fees.

Appointment is subject to the right to work in the UK and RSCM Safer Recruitment processes, including completion of a Confidential Self-Declaration, Enhanced DBS check with barring and appropriate level of safeguarding training.

The Youth Choir Director is accountable, in the first instance, to the Education Programmes Manager who, together with the RSCM Director, is responsible for the department's strategic planning. The Choir's activities are organised by the Courses and Choirs Administrator, who is a key point of contact for the Youth Choir Director. Other members of the RSCM staff team (safeguarding; finance; marketing; digital) support the choir's activities.

## The RSCM Youth Choir

The RSCM Youth Choir is an exciting chamber choir for about 30 young singers aged 16-23 (so spanning school, further/higher education and early career). Members are based around the UK, with varied backgrounds in church, cathedral and school music-making, and have varied aspirations for the future. Those who have passed RSCM Gold Award (or ABRSM Grade 8 Singing or equivalent) are encouraged to audition.

The Youth Choir is a core element of our education programme. We are committed to developing independent, adaptable and confident musicians, with key musical leadership skills they can take forward into the future. We are keen to expose choir members to a wide variety of sacred choral repertoire – ancient, contemporary and everything in between – and foster a culture of continuous improvement and lifelong learning. The liturgical underpinning of the choir's work is important, and we encourage singers to understand the music they sing in the context of the worship of the church.

The choir was founded as the Millennium Youth Choir in 1999 and, since then, has provided opportunities for hundreds of young people to engage at the highest standards with an exciting range of sacred choral music in worship. Under former directors Martin Neary, Gordon Stewart and David Ogden, and current director Adrian Lucas, the choir has sung services at many cathedrals, broadcast Choral Evensong on BBC Radio 3, and been involved in a variety of other musical projects and opportunities. Former members have gone on to sing with some of the UK's leading professional vocal ensembles, such as VOCES8 and Gesualdo Six and, in recent years, several members have joined the Genesis Sixteen programme.

As well as being a source of education, learning and development, the choir also has an ambassadorial role, sharing the best of what the RSCM, and church music more widely, can offer, particularly as the RSCM approaches its Centenary in 2027. We are looking forward to exploring and expanding this element of the choir's activity during the next few years.



## The Youth Choir Director

The Youth Choir Director has an important role in shaping the planning and delivery of Choir activities, bringing their experience, skills, ideas and expertise, whilst working within the priorities outlined in the Education Strategy. They should model effective but compassionate leadership, able to inspire young people and enable each of them to flourish individually as singers and musicians, within the context of a safe and inclusive environment.

### To complete the contracted task, the Youth Choir Director will:

- Contribute to the planning of musical and liturgical aspects of Youth Choir activities, in consultation with RSCM Education and according to the principles and strategic priorities set by the RSCM. This will include:
  - Contributing to a discussion about the programme of services, concerts and other performance opportunities
  - Proposing repertoire, according to guidelines given
- Contribute to discussions about staffing, timetabling and other practical considerations.
- Contribute to the recruitment of Emerging Leaders (early-career music leaders who take part in some residential courses).
- Lead musical activity at courses and events, by taking rehearsals, leading workshops, and conducting services and performances.
- Be the final decision maker on all matters during courses and events – musical, logistical and pastoral/medical, with remote support available from RSCM staff to help with decision making.
- Support the work of the other music staff (Organist, Vocal Coach, Emerging Leaders etc), ensuring that they can fulfil their own responsibilities, and giving them appropriate opportunities to develop in their role.
- Exemplify the ethos of the choir and set the tone for staff and singer conduct, behaviour and attitude.
- Work to ensure, as far as possible, that each choir member has a safe, happy and fulfilling experience.
- Advocate for the work of the Youth Choir and the wider charity in relevant contexts.

The Youth Choir Director will also be responsible for auditioning prospective members (mostly online), according to agreed criteria. The number of auditions varies from year to year and attracts additional fees.

During residential courses, the Youth Choir Director is supported by a wider team of musical staff (as appropriate to the scale of the course). Pastoral Assistants take care of the singers' wellbeing and respond to any health or welfare concerns, and an Administrator ensures the logistics of the course run smoothly.

## **The Youth Choir Director must:**

### *Knowledge/skills*

- be a professional musician and choral director, with extensive experience of teaching, rehearsing and conducting at a very high level and with the relevant age-group
- be involved in ongoing work which requires a similar set of skills
- have a working knowledge of a wide variety of (sacred) choral music, including an awareness of newly published works, and the ability to suggest appropriate repertoire to suit the requirements and profile of the choir and its members
- understand the musical requirements of the liturgies to be used and demonstrate the importance of the liturgical foundation of the choir's work
- have a keen interest in the musical and leadership progression of choir members and be able to make a positive contribution to their development
- have an instinctive understanding of essential safeguarding principles, and matters relating to health and safety, and an appreciation of their importance
- understand the limitations of their role, and be able to judge when a question or issue must be escalated

### *Personal qualities*

- be a team leader, with the ability to work with a wide variety of people with differing experience and skills and communicate values and aspirations successfully to staff and choir members
- be able to set aside personal agendas and willing to work within the aims of the RSCM Education Strategy
- understand, and be an advocate for, the role of music in worship
- be exceptionally well organised, with enough capacity to complete the required planning and preparation
- have a 'can do' attitude to challenges and new initiatives
- be willing to share expertise with, and learn from, colleagues
- be proactive in making suggestions and spotting potential issues before they become a concern
- be pastorally minded, with a good understanding of the needs of older teenagers and young adults and the ability to engage them in activities
- be able to sustain a busy timetable for the duration of residential courses
- actively model and support the aims and ethos of the RSCM

## The application process

For an informal discussion about the task, please email Fiona Wright ([recruitment@rscm.com](mailto:recruitment@rscm.com)) to arrange a call at a convenient time.

### How to apply:

Please submit a CV and covering letter, outlining why you are interested in the task and how you fulfil the advertised criteria. Applications should include the names and contact details for two referees, at least one of which we can contact before interview. Your CV and covering letter should be emailed to [recruitment@rscm.com](mailto:recruitment@rscm.com).

Applications must be received by 5.00pm (GMT) on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to submit a short, unedited, video recording of a rehearsal they have recently taken (c.10 minutes). Ideally, the video would demonstrate work with young adults, but we appreciate that this may not always be possible. Further technical instructions will be given to shortlisted candidates.

Online interviews will be arranged during the week beginning 17<sup>th</sup> March.

