



# Director of Music Opportunity

*Freelance fees totalling around £16,000 per annum*

## About Steel City Choristers

Steel City Choristers is a charity based in Sheffield that is pioneering a new model for sustaining and sharing the cathedral choral tradition. We are passionate about the power of music to change lives. Our mission is to inspire and train children to sing and serve a diverse range of churches and other communities with high quality choral music.

Formed in 2020 following the closure of Sheffield Cathedral choir, we are an independent and innovative choir with children aged 6-18 singing treble by themselves and experienced adults singing the three lower parts. While sacred music makes up the majority of our repertoire, we also enjoy singing occasional secular arrangements. We serve a diverse range of churches and other communities across Sheffield and beyond, with 40-50 performances a year.

As well as full choir rehearsals, we have small group provision to support our Juniors to develop strong foundations before joining the main choir, as well as for our older boys as their voices change. See Annex A for details of our rehearsal schedule and music team.

Over the last five years we have nurtured the growth of a thriving all-age choral community and developed a robust organisational and funding model for sustaining it. We have engaged and served many communities who would never otherwise have accessed and enjoyed traditional choral music, while also singing in prestigious places such as Durham, Hereford, Ripon, Sheffield, Southwell, St Paul's, Winchester and Berlin cathedrals. We have built musical collaborations locally and nationally, and toured both in this country and abroad.

We are excited about the next chapter of our journey, and the energy, vision and musical quality that will result from the appointment of our next Director of Music. Highlights of the coming year to look forward to include:

- weekend services at Durham Cathedral on 31 Oct and 1 Nov 2026
- weekend services at Westminster Abbey on 3 and 4 April 2027
- fundraising concerts in Ecclesfield and Ealing, and (TBC) Sheffield Cathedral
- a Pentecost Service with Diocesan choirs at Sheffield Cathedral on 9 May 2027
- a [Reasons to Sing!](#) project with the Metal Methodists: *Our Story, Our Song*.

Steel City Choristers is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We follow Safer Recruitment procedures. The charity is in good financial health: we hold six months' reserves and are funded by a diverse range of income streams including regular giving from a strong base of individual supporters and a range of grant funders.

Further information is available on our website [steelcitychoristers.org.uk](http://steelcitychoristers.org.uk), including about our team, our policies and our calendar of future performances. You may also be interested to read our most recent [annual report](#).



## **The Opportunity**

We are seeking an exceptionally talented and inspiring musician to serve as our next Director of Music from September 2026.

Your expertise in choir training and your passion for Anglican choral music will be key to further developing the quality of the musical education we deliver to our Choristers and the standard to which the choir sings. Your leadership will ensure that Steel City Choristers continues to thrive in the next chapter of its exciting journey, attracting and retaining both children and adult singers and further building its reputation locally and nationally as a credible and innovative organisation.

## **Services**

In summary, the services that you will provide to the charity will comprise:

- **Choir training.** Training and developing the choir and inspiring children to sing to the best of their ability in the cathedral choral tradition. Planning and leading twice-weekly term-time rehearsals and around 40 or 50 church services or other community events or concerts a year in and around Sheffield, often but not always at weekends. Recruiting new children and adult singers.
- **Leadership.** Providing visible leadership to build up the Steel City Choristers community through authentic relationships and regular communication. Providing advice to the Trustees on how best to deliver the charity's objectives. Working collaboratively with trustees, staff and volunteers on both strategic and operational matters. Developing relationships with hosts and ensuring we meet their needs, including by choosing appropriate repertoire.

Full details of the services you will provide are set out at Annex B.

## **Basis of engagement**

You will serve as our Director of Music and provide your professional expertise and services to the charity on a freelance basis. We will agree contractual and fee arrangements for the period September 2026 to July 2027, with your appointment subject to review after the first term. By mutual agreement, we will then seek to agree new contractual arrangements for each subsequent academic year. We will aim to agree on a mutual aspiration to work together for at least three years, and to give each other at least three months' notice of any intention to bring our relationship to an end.

Your primary relationships will be with our Chair of Trustees with whom you will have a regular dialogue about the quality of the services you provide to the charity. You will also liaise regularly with the chair of our Operations Committee and other Trustees and volunteers on matters relating to the services you deliver.

## **Rates of Pay**

We anticipate paying you fees totalling around £16,000 in 2026-27.

We will pay you according to the number of rehearsals, performances, events, auditions and meetings each month, which will be indicative of the overall services you provide, including your professional advice and your preparation for rehearsals and performances. We will pay you an hourly rate for any schools or community workshops you deliver and negotiate fees for attendance on any domestic or foreign tours on a case-by-case basis. Further details on the fees we will pay you are set out at Annex C.

## Selection Criteria

You will be assessed against the following essential and desirable criteria:

<p><b>Choir Training</b> <i>Essential</i></p>	<p>A passionate enthusiasm for the Anglican choral tradition.</p> <p>The expertise to train and develop Steel City Choristers to sing to the highest musical standards.</p> <p>An outstanding proven ability to nurture and train children to sing cathedral-style choral music, and a joy in developing their musical talents.</p>
<p><b>Choir Training</b> <i>Desirable</i></p>	<p>Sufficient keyboard skills to lead rehearsals, when necessary, without an accompanist.</p> <p>Experience of recruiting new members into a choir of children and young people.</p>
<p><b>Leadership</b> <i>Essential</i></p>	<p>The maturity, humility and strength of character to play a central leadership role within our close-knit community, and build authentic, productive and collaborative working relationships within the choir and with external partners.</p> <p>The ability to relate in a professional and positive way to children, giving and earning respect appropriately to and from children aged 6 to 18 years old, and inspiring them to a love of the choral tradition and give of their best to the choir.</p> <p>A passionate commitment to, and clear vision for, making cathedral-style choral music more inclusive and accessible to a diverse range of children and communities.</p> <p>The empathy and creativity to understand and meet the needs of our diverse range of hosts, including an appreciation of the role of choral music in Christian worship.</p>
<p><b>Availability</b> <i>Essential</i></p>	<p>The ability to commit to the choir's regular rehearsal schedule, and wherever possible to prioritise dates in our performance schedule.</p>
<p><b>Safeguarding</b> <i>Essential</i></p>	<p>A robust commitment to diversity and inclusion and to safeguarding everyone involved in the organisation.</p>

## Application Process

- Before applying, you are warmly invited to do one or more of the following:
  - have an informal conversation with our Chair of Trustees, Kate Caroe: please email [kate@steelcitychoristers.org.uk](mailto:kate@steelcitychoristers.org.uk) to arrange a time to speak
  - contact our current Director of Music, Eleanor Jarvis: please email [eleanor@steelcitychoristers.org.uk](mailto:eleanor@steelcitychoristers.org.uk)
  - attend and observe one of our regular Monday or Friday rehearsals: please email [kate@steelcitychoristers.org.uk](mailto:kate@steelcitychoristers.org.uk).
- The closing date for applications is 5pm on Thursday 14 May 2026.
- We will aim to let applicants know if they have been shortlisted and confirm instructions for interviews and auditions, together with details of the interview team, by Friday 22 May.
- We will request references for shortlisted candidates, to be provided by 5pm on Friday 5 June.
- Shortlisted applicants will attend an interview during the day and meet and conduct the choir in the early evening on Monday 15 June.
- Appointment of the successful candidate will be subject to a signed safeguarding declaration and a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check.
- The appointed candidate will need to supply evidence of completion of appropriate safeguarding training prior to commencing work.
- We would ideally like the successful applicant to start work at our first rehearsal after the summer, scheduled for Friday 4 September. However, we will make alternative arrangements if they are not able to start until a later date.

## How to Apply

Please send your application to our Charity Secretary by emailing [chris@steelcitychoristers.org.uk](mailto:chris@steelcitychoristers.org.uk) by 5pm on Thursday 14 May. Please include:

- a covering letter explaining your interest in and suitability for the role, providing evidence of how you meet our selection criteria, and outlining your career ambitions and how this post will support them
- a CV outlining your relevant experience and achievements to date
- names, phone numbers and email addresses for two referees willing to provide written references at short notice should you be shortlisted.

**Thank you for your interest. We look forward to hearing from you!**

Please also see attached:

- Annex A: Our Rehearsal Schedule and Music Team
- Annex B: Services to be Provided
- Annex C: Fee Arrangements

## ANNEX A: OUR REHEARSAL SCHEDULE AND MUSIC TEAM

School term time weekly rehearsal schedule (approximately 36 weeks/year)

	Juniors	Choristers	Seniors / Changing Voices	Clerks
<b>Mondays</b>				
4.15 - 4.30		Small groups		
4.30 - 5.10	Musicianship	DoM-led rehearsal		
5.10 - 5.30	DoM-led rehearsal	Youth work		
5.30 - 6.00	Youth work	DoM-led rehearsal	Sectionals*	
6.00 - 6.30		Music Theory**		
<b>Fridays</b>				
4.30 - 5.30		DoM-led rehearsal	Changing Voices	
5.30 - 6.00		DoM-led rehearsal		
6.00 - 6.30		DoM-led rehearsal		
6.30 - 7.30				DoM-led rehearsal

\*Senior choristers singing treble participate in Chorister rehearsals/activities except on Monday 5.30-6.00

\*\*Currently, we hold two 4-week blocks of music theory in each of the autumn and spring terms.

### Other members of the Steel City Choristers music team

Our team of paid staff and volunteers currently includes:

Name	Role	Responsibilities
<b>Timothy Peters</b>	Assistant Director of Music	Younger chorister singing lessons Ingots: our small group for boys
<b>Kate Caroe</b>	Junior Chorister Lead	Junior musicianship sessions Youth Work
<b>Vivien Pike</b>	Singing Teacher	Older chorister singing lessons
<b>Jeremy Dawson</b>	Volunteer	Senior Sectionals Changing Voices Music theory planning and delivery
<b>Clare Wallace</b>	Volunteer	Girls of Steel: our small group for older girls Juniors' music theory planning and delivery
<b>Chris Kingdom Benedict Rowe</b>	Volunteers	Music theory delivery

## **ANNEX B: SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED**

You will provide your independent music direction services to the Charity as an external, self-employed professional, allowing us to benefit from your expertise and specialist skills.

### **Core Services**

- Training the choir to sing to the highest musical standards and learn new repertoire, exercising artistic discretion over rehearsal methods and approaches.
  - Leading twice-weekly term-time rehearsals at St Mark's Church Broomhill, Sheffield (or such other mutually agreed location) according to the pre-agreed schedule set in Annex A subject to any additional and mutually agreed changes.
  - Planning and producing rehearsal schedules for all sections of the choir, including the full choir, Changing Voices, Juniors and those younger choristers who will have singing lessons during rehearsal time.
  - Liaising and working collaboratively with our Assistant Director of Music and other members of our musical team to ensure coordinated and seamless delivery of our overall music programme.
  - Overseeing and supporting the musical development of individual Choristers and Clerks, liaising with singing teachers about their musical progress.
  - Supporting the planning and delivery of music theory sessions.
- Leading the choir to perform a diverse schedule of services, concerts and other events, as agreed in advance of each term.
  - Developing warm and positive relationships with hosts, respecting their needs and preferences while inspiring them to explore and enjoy choral music further.
  - Planning repertoire for each performance, agreeing it with Trustees in advance of each term and producing a termly repertoire list for choir members.
  - Managing expected attendance by choir members at performances and, where necessary, arranging adult depts as well as accompanists.
  - Liaising with Trustees, hosts and other performers to discuss performance and pre-performance rehearsal arrangements and agreeing a plan for the day with the chair of the Operations Committee.
  - Liaising prior to each performance with the lead chaperone and chair of the Operations Committee to confirm logistics and safeguarding arrangements.
- As session leader, taking overall responsibility for safeguarding at rehearsals and performances, and complying with all relevant safeguarding requirements.
- Providing visible and credible leadership within the Steel City Choristers community, building and maintaining relationships that support regular and open dialogue, and working collaboratively with Trustees and other staff and volunteers to foster a team approach to planning and leading the charity's activities.
  - Leading on engaging and communicating with Choristers' parents and Clerks
    - Communicating with choir members about rehearsals and performances, including in relation to apologies for attendance.

- Communicating regularly with parents, including in person before and especially after rehearsals, to provide feedback on their child's musical development.
  - Emailing parents and Clerks about performance arrangements at least three days in advance.
  - Planning and leading, in collaboration with the Chair of Trustees, twice-termly choir parents' meetings during regular rehearsal time and termly Clerks meetings after regular rehearsal time.
- Providing professional advice to help the Charity fulfill its objective to make choral music more inclusive and accessible to a diverse range of children and communities.
  - Advising Trustees on the development of schedule of future performances and how best and creatively to meet the needs of our host communities.
  - Attending one Trustee meeting and two Operations Committee meetings per term.
- Leading on recruitment to ensure we maintain a full and balanced choir of Choristers and Clerks.
  - Leading auditions to identify children with the potential, and adults with the expertise, to join Steel City Choristers, and appointing new members taking into account individuals' musicality and the choir's overall vocal balance.
  - Liaising with children's parents and adult singers to set up auditions (on specific audition days or separately by arrangement) and following up afterwards.
  - Building and managing an engaged pool of adult depts and accompanists.
- Reviewing the impact of your services and providing your professional advice and recommendations on any strategic and operational issues arising, including through a termly written report to be presented to and discussed with Trustees.

### **Additional Services by Agreement**

By mutual agreement, you may provide additional services, such as:

- organising and leading singing workshops in schools and communities, particularly those with whom we have started developing a longer term relationship, to help us recruit choristers and connect with diverse communities
- participating in domestic or overseas tours
- further specific services, including:
  - making site visits to new performance venues to inspect the premises, draft a risk assessment and attend chaperone meetings to brief them accordingly
  - producing and communicating the termly Choir Diary detailing all rehearsals and performances for the forthcoming school term
  - leading social media, newsletter and other communications with the Charity's followers and supporters to keep them informed and engaged.

## **ANNEX C: FEE ARRANGEMENTS IN 2026-27**

### **Introduction**

We will pay you a fee for your Core Services based on the number of rehearsals, performances, meetings, events and auditions each month.

By mutual agreement, we will also pay you:

- an hourly rate for any schools or community workshops you organise and deliver
- fees by negotiation for any domestic or international tours
- fees by negotiation for any further specific additional services.

As an independent freelance contractor, it will be your responsibility to provide an acceptable, DBS-checked substitute if for any reason you are unable to provide your services, including the performance schedule you have agreed to deliver each term. If a regular rehearsal or scheduled performance you have agreed to deliver is cancelled by the Charity at less than 7 days' notice, you may still invoice for 50% of your expected fee.

### **Choir Training**

We will pay you for your services to train and develop the choir on the basis of:

- £75 per Monday rehearsal with no theory session
- £100 per Monday rehearsal including a theory session
- £150 per Friday rehearsal
- £20 per audition
- A fee per performance.

Given the diverse range and nature of the performances we deliver, we will confirm performance fees payable termly in advance in light of the planned schedule. We will pay:

- £180 for a church service and preceding one hour rehearsal
- £250 for a full evening concert and preceding 90-minute rehearsal
- A fee agreed on a case-by-case basis for other performances.

The number of performances each term will depend on a range of factors including the invitations received, any scheduling constraints, and the available budget. The date, timing and fee of each performance you will deliver will be agreed between you and the Charity prior to each school term and the Choir Diary being circulated. Additional performance opportunities that arise at short notice will be confirmed by mutual agreement.

All of the above rates are inclusive and reflective of the full range of services that you will deliver to train and develop the choir as set out in Annex B, as well as:

- your own musical preparation for rehearsals
- the time you spend setting up the rehearsal and performance space
- your attendance at any optional choir social events that you decide to join.

## **Meetings and Other Events**

Each term we will pay you £175 for planning and attending meetings that are central to the operation and leadership of the charity, comprising:

- £50 for attending one Trustee meeting for at least an hour
- £100 for helping plan and attending two Operations Committee meetings for at least an hour
- £25 for planning and leading one Clerks' meeting for at least half an hour after regular rehearsal time.

For any occasional events or performances that we would like you to attend outside of regular rehearsal time, but at which you are not conducting (e.g. a workshop with a visiting conductor, or a service with another choir) we will pay you £30 per hour pro rata, with the number of hours to be invoiced agreed in advance.

## **Singing Workshops**

Any singing workshops delivered in schools and community settings will be paid pro rata at a rate of £70 per hour. This rate is inclusive and reflective of associated work, including:

- efforts to build relationships and communicate with schools and communities, some of which may not, at least initially, yield commitments to hosting a workshop
- negotiating and agreeing arrangements for delivering each workshop
- where necessary, setting up before and clearing up after each workshop.

Trustees will sign off any workshops that you propose in advance to confirm that there is sufficient budget available and that they align with the Charity's strategic priorities. As a guide, in 2025-26 the Trustees budgeted for a maximum of 15 hours of singing workshops, unless the host covered further costs.

## **Travel and Tours**

In line with the Charity's Finance and Expenses policy, the Charity does not reimburse travel expenses to attend rehearsals and performances within Sheffield.

For performance outside of Sheffield, the reasonable cost of travel from Sheffield will be covered by the Charity in line with its expense reimbursement policies. If any overnight accommodation is required, this will be arranged and paid for by the Charity. If you choose to make your own arrangements separate from those put in place by the Charity, you may do so at your own cost.

Any additional fees for performances, tours or trips away from Sheffield will be negotiated with the Trustees on a case-by-case basis.