

ABO Nominee Director Application Pack

Welcome and overview

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Board member of the Association of British Orchestras (ABO).

The performing arts sector is currently facing unprecedented challenges and yet music has the potential to play a vital role in aiding the nation's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This is the context in which the ABO Board is seeking new nominated Board members to expand its expertise, particularly through representation from the fields outlined later in this document.

The Board believes passionately in creating an inclusive culture, where voices from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences can contribute to ensure that the ABO is truly representative of its membership and is able to fulfil its mission to support an innovative, collaborative and sustainable orchestral sector by providing advice, support, intelligence and information to the people who make British orchestras a global success.

This pack will provide you with key information about the ABO, the role and responsibilities of a Board member, particular skill sets and experience the ABO Board is seeking from new members, and how to apply. At the end is a short section of FAQs which may answer some of the immediate questions you may have; however, we always welcome a dialogue with interested candidates and if you would like to speak to one of our friendly Board members or a member of the ABO team in advance of applying, please just get in touch (see 'Next Steps')

ABOUT THE ABO

The ABO, founded in 1948, is the national body representing the collective interests of professional orchestras and youth ensembles throughout the UK, with other categories of membership including conservatoires, venues and artist management. Our mission is to enable and support an innovative, collaborative and sustainable orchestral sector by providing advice, support, intelligence and information to the people who make British orchestras a global success.

Day-to-day operations are led by its Director Mark Pemberton, along with a small, dedicated team of two full-time staff members, supported by Education, Finance and PR consultants.

The key **Strategic Objectives** of the ABO cover three areas of activity: **Connecting**, **Championing** and **Developing**. Using the framework of the mission statement, we will deliver on these key objectives through:

Connecting

Connecting members to other members and the wider industry through networking opportunities, keeping our members well-informed and up-to-date with best practice to help build resilience and financial sustainability.

Championing

Championing orchestras and the wider membership, raising their profile and influence with key stakeholders and the British public, through political engagement, the media, social media and stakeholder bulletins. We will track and influence the development of legislation and government policies both in the UK and internationally and advocate the value of public and private investment in the orchestral sector.

Developing

Developing the skills and knowledge of our members' staff, including providing and signposting to high quality professional development opportunities and nurturing emerging leaders.

You can find out more about the ABO at www.abo.org.uk, including a list of existing Board members.

You can also download the ABO's annual review detailing what an average year of activity for the ABO looks like here: <https://abo.org.uk/about-us/mission>

Alpesh Chauhan and BBC Philharmonic Ten Pieces Prom (2016) c.Guy Levy



Board members' responsibilities

Every Board has certain legal and financial responsibilities, alongside the more creative and exciting tasks of shaping future strategy by embracing the full range of experience and expertise of Board members. Don't worry if you do not have previous experience of sitting on a Board: each Board member is given a comprehensive induction to the organisation and the responsibilities the role entails, with training offered to fill in any knowledge gaps.

Key responsibilities include:

- Developing, setting and upholding of the vision, mission and values of the ABO by participating fully and frankly in Board discussions, bringing the benefit of an individual's particular knowledge, skills and abilities to bear
- Strategic planning, evaluation and decision-making
- Supporting the Director and the ABO team in their work
- Acting as an ambassador for the ABO
- Introducing the ABO team to professional, political or community networks

- Attending events on behalf of the ABO
- Reviewing budgets, management accounts and statutory accounts
- Risk management
- Reviewing and development of all internal controls, financial and operational
- Reviewing of staffing structures and resources, including senior management recruitment and remuneration
- Oversight of reporting to regulators and funders
- Ensuring compliance, transparency and accountability in line with governing documents, and legal obligations
- Board succession planning

Able Orchestra performing at ABO Conference 2020 with the Hallé and BBC Philharmonic. Produced by Orchestras Live



Key Information

Time commitment	Up to five Board Meetings per year, and the Annual ABO Conference which all Board members are encouraged to attend. From time to time, individual Board members also work with the executive team on strategic projects directly related to their professional background and may be required to sit on or lead specific working groups. Board members are encouraged to attend ABO members' performances and events.
Meeting Location	London and occasionally regional. It is possible for Board members to join meetings remotely using digital technologies. The annual conference is held in a different UK city each year.
Remuneration	ABO Board member roles are not accompanied by any financial remuneration; though reasonable travel expenses may be claimed when agreed in advance. The ABO encourages sustainable travel options.

Board terms	The period of appointment for nominated Board members is an initial three years, renewable for a further three years, to a maximum of six years.
To apply	Deadline for applications is Tuesday 15 June 2021. See 'Next Steps' for further information

Opening Panel discussion at ABO Conference 2020 in Manchester © Mark McNulty



Person Specification

The ABO Board has deliberately not included a person specification in this pack as we believe passionately that we want to cast our recruitment net widely, finding people within our membership that represent the full diversity of the orchestral sector.

The ABO Board members recently undertook a skills audit and identified areas of underserved knowledge and expertise amongst existing Board members that will be a priority in this nominated Board members' recruitment round. These key areas of professional experience include:

- **Education, Creative Learning and Communities** - As we have seen a year-on-year decrease in the numbers of children learning instruments and a similar decrease in those taking music at GCSE and A-Level, further work needs to be undertaken to advocate for the orchestral sector's vital work in communities and learning environments, and the development of a vibrant and inclusive music education sector.
- **Social impact creation & measurement** - The Board wishes to expand its knowledge and ability to articulate the impact of the ABO and its members' work in terms of social impact, which in turn will help in public, funder and political advocacy.

- **Digital Communication and Innovation** - The COVID pandemic has accelerated the need for orchestras to embrace digital technology as a medium to make, present and communicate work, enabling orchestras to reach new audiences, monetise content creation and increase environmental sustainability.

An intergenerational project with diverse participants in Bedford, led by the Philharmonia and produced by Orchestras Live



FAQs

We understand that you are likely to have questions. Here are a few sample questions we've been asked in the past which may help to reassure you that it is exactly someone like you we are looking to attract! And of course, if we haven't answered your question below, please feel free to arrange an introductory telephone call with an ABO Board member or staff member (see NEXT STEPS)

Do I need to have worked for an orchestra to be an ABO Board member?

The ABO Board consists of nominated members who are directly elected from the ABO's membership organisations, and co-opted members who are external professionals appointed by the Board to contribute skills and expertise for the benefit of the ABO. The ABO allows only one representative from any one organisation to sit concurrently on its Board, which means that if your orchestra is already represented, then you will not be able to apply in this round.

Will I need to have experience of sitting on Board?

No. A comprehensive induction will be offered. We are keen to bring different voices from the orchestral sector to the Board table.

Is it possible to seek a conversation with someone before I apply?

Yes, we welcome and encourage interested candidates to seek an initial phone conversation with an ABO Board member or staff member. We would also ask that, if you are not the Chief Executive of your organisation, you speak to your CEO before formally applying, since you will be representing your organisation as a Board member.

Will there be an induction for new board members?

New board members will be supported and nurtured as part of an enabling approach to board and executive joiners. Your ideas and views will be welcomed and you will be introduced to the executive team and board members on joining.

If I have additional needs (e.g. access) will ABO consider my individual circumstances?

The ABO welcomes applications for Board membership from everyone with the professional skills and passion to contribute and will make all possible adaptations to accommodate an individual's personal needs, to ensure that they can play a full and active role as a Board member. If you have any concerns, please feel free to raise any matters in your initial conversation or in your application.

What if I cannot afford to travel to London for meetings / conferences?

The ABO will consider remunerating reasonable and pre-agreed travel expenses to attend Board meetings and business, and can enable virtual attendance at Board meetings.

NEXT STEPS

We hope that this pack is helpful in describing the opportunity of being an ABO Board member, and that we have inspired you to want to make an application. The process is simple and straightforward and is detailed below.

If prior to applying you would like an initial, informal telephone conversation with a current member of the Board or the team, please email Mark on mark@abo.org.uk who will be pleased to arrange a call.

To apply, please email Mark on mark@abo.org.uk including a statement of no more than 200 words about what you believe you will bring to the board, in particular in response to the priorities the board has set for this round of recruitment, to arrive no later than **5pm on Tuesday 15 June**. This statement will be published on the ABO website and will be accessible to members once nominations close.

All candidate applications and statements may be viewed online by a nominated representative from each organisation from within the ABO's membership prior to the election. Each organisation will have a vote to elect their two preferred candidates at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) held by Zoom on Tuesday 22 June 2021.

New Board members will have the opportunity for individual meetings with the Chair and Director, as well as a visit to the ABO office once Covid-19 restrictions allow, and an introduction to the ABO team. Board members will also receive a full (digital) induction pack with copies of all relevant company and board documents, previous annual reports, accounts, minutes of recent meetings, policies and procedures, and evidence of recent organisational output (reports, campaigns, publications).

ABO Contacts

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(RPO/STROKESTRA®)



National Children's Orchestra of Great Britain

