

PRESS RELEASE

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POPULAR TRAINING PROGRAMME RETURNS TO EMPOWER NEXT GENERATION COMMUNITY MUSIC LEADERS



Alumni from the BSO Young Associates programme ©Corin Messer

- Emerging creatives (18-30) keen to work in their local communities are encouraged to apply to become **Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's** next **BSO Young Associates**.
- The programme offers people based in the South West and traditionally underrepresented in the UK's arts workforce* a chance to catapult their career.
- Applications for the **8-month bursary-supported** training programme, which is generously supported by **The Calleva Foundation**, are due by 16 August.
- Launched in 2022, the programme has nurtured **8 emerging leaders to date**, each of whom continues to pursue a freelance portfolio career in music.

Two young people will begin making music in hospitals, schools, community centres and more, when they join Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) as BSO Young Associates later this year.

Offering a platform from which to catapult a career, the bursary-supported training opportunity welcomes people from backgrounds that are traditionally underrepresented in the UK's arts sector*. This includes people from low-income backgrounds, of Global Majority heritage, or identifying as disabled, D/deaf or neurodivergent.

The BSO's Young Associates are supported through practical experience, training, and one-to-one mentoring from the Orchestra's award-winning Participate team and its BSO Associate Musicians, who live and work throughout the region. The Young Associates will also work alongside the Orchestra's professional musicians in community settings.

The part-time programme – which runs biennially – is tailored to each Young Associate, who will commit around 10 days each month.

All eight alumni from the programme have continued to pursue freelance portfolio careers in music – with the group joining the **BSO Participate Music Leader Network**. The group meets annually for CPD and networking, with several members continuing to work on the Orchestra's projects across the region.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's Chief Executive, Dougie Scarfe OBE, said:

"We're excited to launch the search for the next BSO Young Associates, and to support more brilliant young people from the South West with training, mentoring and practical experience over the coming year.

"It takes enormous passion and commitment to launch a career as a young creative today – and for people traditionally underrepresented in the sector the stakes are often high. We're deeply proud of alumni from the scheme, who all continue to work in the sector – they remain the boldest advocates for the empowering impact of music-making. We are grateful to The Calleva Foundation for their shared faith in the programme and their pledge to support it from 2026-29."

Stephen and Caroline Butt, Trustees of The Calleva Foundation, said:

"We're delighted to support a programme that nurtures the next generation of outreach specialists, providing life-changing career pathways for young people and helping to create a more diverse musical workforce."

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is a registered charity, which exists to bring music into people's lives. In addition to its world-class concert hall performances, the Orchestra supports people of all ages and backgrounds across creative health and wellbeing, music education and community music-making. Last year, it delivered almost 400 learning and participatory events, in more than 100 venues throughout the South West of England.

The BSO Young Associates programme in 2026-29 is generously funded by The Calleva Foundation, in memory of Jack Butt. For full details and to apply, visit bsolive.com/jobs – entries close on Sunday 16 August.

[ENDS]

NOTES TO EDITORS

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1. ***Note:** Arts Council of England's *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Review 2018-23* states that disabled people account for 9% of the arts workforce (compared to 22% UK population), and people who identify as Black, Asian or ethnically diverse for 15% (compared to 18% of the UK population): <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/research-and-data/diversity-data/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-review-2018-23>; Only 16 percent of the creative workforce are from working class social origins, compared to just under one-third across the whole UK economy (Carey et al, 2020, 2021b) Taken from *Creative Majority Report, APPG* (September 2021): <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/resources/reports/creative-majority-report-v2.pdf>
2. **High-resolution images available on request:**
 - a) BSO Young Associates @Corin Messer
 - b) Dougie Scarfe, BSO Chief Executive @Corin Messer
 - c) Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra @Mark Allan
3. **Alumni of the BSO Young Associates programme:**

2022/23 – Sehyogue Aulakh and Lila Bhattacharjee
2023/24 - Àánú Sodipe, Ed Lee and Tammy Sullivan
2024/25 - Harry Bassett, Sophia Benton and Charlotte Foley
4. **ABOUT BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** | bsolive.com

Chief Conductor – Mark Wigglesworth

Celebrated Composer – Thomas Adès | Artist-in-Residence – Boris Giltburg

Principal Guest Conductor — Chloé Van Soeterstède | Associate Guest Conductor – David Hill MBE

Conductor Laureate & Artistic Director, Voices from the East – Kirill Karabits OBE

Conductor Emeritus – Marin Alsop | Conductor Laureate – Andrew Litton

Calleva Assistant Conductor – Michal Oren

One of the UK's best-loved orchestras, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) is known for championing the role of culture in people's lives. Based at Lighthouse, Poole, the Orchestra is resident in Bristol, Exeter, Portsmouth, Southampton and Yeovil, and performs in towns and villages across the region. A registered charity, it is the largest performing organisation in the South West of England, serving one of the biggest and most diverse regions in the UK.

Mark Wigglesworth became the Orchestra's Chief Conductor in 2024, and his opening seasons have magnified the BSO's reputation for the highest quality music-making. The Orchestra boasts an enviable list of named conductors, including Principal Guest Conductor Chloé Van Soeterstède alongside Marin Alsop, David Hill MBE, Kirill Karabits, Andrew Litton and new Calleva Assistant Conductor, Michal Oren.

In 2026/27, the BSO welcomes Thomas Adès as its Celebrated Composer, in a series that shines a spotlight on new British music. The Orchestra shares eight performances, including one that Adès conducts – and local pupils will interact with his music through further events.



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The Orchestra's two-year Beethoven celebration: Road to Joy runs from October 2026. Alongside symphonic performances, the series provides three immersive Beethoven Now weekends, delving deeper into the enduring legacy of the composer's music and humanity.

The BSO welcomes pianist Boris Giltburg as Artist-in-Residence, with five performances across the season. Further highlights include debut performances from conductor Charlotte Corderoy, pianists Junyan Chen, Eva Gevorgyan, Isata Kanneh-Mason, and violinist Johan Delane. The BSO's celebrated Digital Concert series continues into its seventh year, with 18 live performances broadcast globally from Poole – this year, supported by Digital Concert Sponsor, Lark Music.

Celebrated for its pioneering community-based BSO Participate work, the Orchestra brings music into people's lives beyond the concert hall thanks to a network of partnerships spanning health, care and music education; with a unique team of dynamic BSO Associate and Young Associate Musicians living in the heart of communities across the South West, it delivered more than 58,000 experiences last year. Its creative health programme continues to expand, with regular sessions at Dorset County Hospital, Dorset HealthCare sites, and Southampton Hospitals Charity. Several Community and Wellbeing Orchestras support a range of needs across the region from Bodmin, Boscombe and Bristol to Chard, Exeter, Newquay and Wincanton.

Following international attention for igniting change, BSO Resound, the world's first professional disabled-led ensemble at the core of a major orchestra, continues to challenge perceptions. The group joins conductors Tom Fetherstonhaugh and Enyi Okpara in 2026/27.

A National Portfolio of Arts Council England, the BSO is a registered charity and relies on generous philanthropic support from individual donors, gifts in wills, corporate partners, and charitable trusts and foundations.