



# ORA SINGERS

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE - JOB DESCRIPTION

ORA Singers is an award-winning professional vocal ensemble, launched in 2016 by its Artistic Director, Suzi Digby OBE. It is the UK's, and perhaps even the world's, leading commissioner of choral music, with an ambition to commission 100 new choral works in 10 years. Thus far, it has commissioned 65 works and recorded 32 across 10 critically-acclaimed albums. Its primary focus with commissioned composers is excellence, whether they be household names (such as John Rutter, Sir James MacMillan, Debbie Wiseman) or exciting prospects (such as Freya Waley-Cohen, Florence Anna Maunders, Owain Park). Two of its commissions – Roderick Williams' *Ave verum corpus Re-imagined* and Joanna Marsh's *All Shall Be Well* – have been awarded the UK's top composition prize, the Ivors Award, and several others have been nominated. Four of its commissioned composers were featured in the Coronation of King Charles III, demonstrating the group's ability to identify and commission the most significant choral composers working today.

ORA is also an internationally recognised performing choir which has had its music broadcast on every continent, including Antarctica! The group was awarded Opus Klassik's 'Best Ensemble of the Year' in 2018, beating competition from ensembles across Europe. Later in 2024, it will make its debut at Wigmore Hall for a concert to be broadcast on BBC Radio 3. In 2022, its concert programme *Elizabeth, Our Queen* was featured on France Télévisions Culturebox. In 2020, ORA performed Thomas Tallis' towering 40-part motet *Spem in alium* alongside a commissioned reflection written by Sir James MacMillan, *Vidi aquam*, in the Tate Modern Turbine Hall during lockdown to a global livestream audience of over 300,000.

The '100 Commissions' project is supported by a Young Composers' Scheme, which has mentored 143 students from 107 state-schools since its introduction in 2019, and a newly established Graduate Composers' Showcase, which will commission x5 early-career composers each year. At a time when composition has been disproportionately affected by funding cuts, ORA will continue to champion the creation of new music, cultivating exceptional and diverse talent, and supporting future generations who will contribute to a richer cultural life and economy in the UK.

We are now seeking a Chief Executive to replace Matthew Beale, who is stepping down to pursue a career abroad. Matthew has been with the company since its inception and has been instrumental in the success that ORA has enjoyed to date and we are hoping for a similarly inspirational and multi-faceted leader to join ORA's small and dedicated team. The Chief Executive of ORA Singers is responsible for the group's overall operation, as an Arts Group, a Charity and a Company. They will work closely with ORA's Chair, Board of Trustees and Artistic Director to see that the organisation flourishes and continues to produce the high quality of work for which it is renowned. We are looking for someone with the drive, determination and diplomacy to build on ORA's already impressive legacy, taking the group to its 10th anniversary, and beyond, and the completion of its extraordinary 100 commissions in 10 years programme.

ORA Singers is committed to diversity in the workplace and the Arts, and warmly welcomes applications from all backgrounds.

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## Job Description

Title	Chief Executive
Reporting to	Chair and Board of Trustees
Working with	Artistic Director
Responsible for	General Manager, Development Director & Artistic Adviser
Contract	[Employment contract for three days a week]
Salary	[Competitive salary for the right applicant]
Holiday	21 days, plus statutory holidays (pro rata)
Location	Flexible including the ORA office (8 Holyrood Street, London, SE1 2EL)



# Job Description

## Leadership:

- Provide exceptional leadership to enable ORA Singers to succeed and grow in line with its charitable objectives and strategic vision;
- Develop the organisation's strategy for the next phase of its growth, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees and the Artistic Director;
- Lead the planning and implementation of ORA's strategy, including coordinating operational, fundraising, musical and educational activities;
- Manage the organisation's overall operation, finances and resources;
- Build and maintain relationships with all of ORA Singers' external stakeholders;
- Build the organisation's performance and recording schedule, maintaining good relations with Festivals, Venues, Producers and Promoters in the UK and abroad;
- Motivate and inspire the ORA Team;
- Act as an Ambassador for ORA Singers.

## Management:

- Oversee and implement recruitment, training, development and performance management of staff;
- Manage permanent staff within the organisation, and ensure best working practice for external consultants and freelance employees;
- Maximise the efficient use of company resources;
- Oversee all contracting including with Staff, Composers, Publishers, Festivals, Collaborative Partners etc.;
- Build and maintain relationships with external stakeholders and potential collaborators.

## Compliance:

- Ensure a safe and healthy environment for everyone employed by ORA Singers, and those involved in their projects and outreach schemes;
- Ensure compliance with all responsibilities required of the organisation by the Charities Commission and Companies House;
- Keep organisational policies up to date (including Safeguarding, Health & Safety and GDPR);
- Maintain an awareness of the Arts scene in general, and the choral scene in particular.

## Financial:

- Produce regular financial reports and forecasts and manage the charity budget;
- Present financial reports to the Board of Trustees at the organisation's quarterly Board Meetings;
- Prepare annual accounts and reports in conjunction with the organisation's external accountants, and ensure that they are submitted in a timely manner;
- Oversee the Company payroll;
- Monitor the fundraising activities of the organisation across applications to the Arts Council and Trusts & Foundations, Corporate support and Individual Giving.

## Communications:

- Manage effective communications within the organisation, ensuring that the Trustees and all staff feel sufficiently informed of the organisation's activities and plans in order to fulfil their responsibilities;
- Oversee communications with external stakeholders including supporters, collaborative partners, musicians and Festivals/Venues/Producers;
- Oversee ORA's social media output and online presence, including regular review of the ORA Singers' websites ([ORASingers.com](http://ORASingers.com) & [ChoralCompose.com](http://ChoralCompose.com));
- Monitor the effectiveness of the organisation's work, and implement change, in response to feedback and data such as online analytics.



# Personal Criteria

## Essential:

- Outstanding interpersonal skills, demonstrably able to communicate confidently and warmly in person and in writing with a wide range of people;
- Proven strategic ability and senior managerial experience;
- Demonstrable experience of financial planning and budget management;
- Experience of raising funds from a range of sources;
- Self-motivated and comfortable working as part of a small team;
- A knowledge and love of classical music, particularly choral music.

## Preferable:

- Experience working in arts organisations;
- Existing contacts across the music profession;
- Knowledge of classical musical festivals, venues and events in continental Europe (ideally combined with fluency in a second language - ideally German, French or Spanish)
- Experience of outreach music with communities and/or young people;
- A significant level of musical education (including participation in a school, church or amateur choir and the ability to read music fluently)

At ORA Singers we are a small and dedicated team. We would expect all members of our team to be willing to work outside of their official remits and office hours on the rare occasions when that is required. As we sometimes work with children, we will also require a DBS check on the successful applicant. Please inform us if this may be a problem.

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## How to apply

Please send a Cover Letter (no more than 2 pages) and CV to:  
thomas.rayner@orasingers.com

Application Deadline: Rolling.

Interviews: To be confirmed with each applicant upon submission.

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