Southampton University Symphony Orchestra Assistant Musical Director

## About the role

The SUSO Assistant Musical Director has a very important role to play in helping to set the agenda for the orchestra, helping the Musical Director with a variety of tasks during the rehearsal process, and helping with the auditions process of the orchestra.

For the successful candidate this is an excellent opportunity to gain a great deal of experience, both in conducting rehearsals and performances, and in the organisation of orchestral projects. The successful candidate will also have a good deal of input into repertoire selection, general musical decision making about SUSO, and plans to move SUSO forward into the future.

The position involves conducting the orchestra for part of each weekly rehearsal and receiving coaching from the Musical Director, then performing one piece in each of SUSO’s end-of-term concerts. This experience is designed to prepare the AMD for the Preterm project in September the following year, at the end of their tenure, which they will conduct in its entirety.

In order to do well, learn a lot, and benefit SUSO, this position requires the AMD to be dedicated to their role and invest time in it. It is recommended that candidates do not apply for this if they have a large number of other time-consuming, extra-curricular responsibilities. For candidates who are able to commit to the position it is likely to be hugely rewarding.

The AMD is responsible to the orchestra’s Musical Director and President.

## Terms

* This role is unpaid. Travel or other expenses will not be reimbursed except in exceptional circumstances and when agreed in advance by the committee.
* The successful applicant is expected to prioritise their attendance at SUSO activities above other extra-curricular activities.
* The role begins following acceptance after audition, in the Summer of 2020, and runs until the conclusion of the Preterm Project in September 2021.
* Required materials (e.g. scores) will be provided by SUSO

## Job description

* + - To be present for the duration of all SUSO rehearsals, performances, and other musical events (e.g. recordings), whose dates and times will be agreed in advance with the committee. This will include all relevant Wednesday evenings during term time and may also include extra weekend rehearsals, to be determined at the beginning of the year.
* To conduct part of the SUSO rehearsal (typically between 20-40 minutes) each week, under the guidance of the MD.
* To conduct one piece in each of SUSO’s main end-of-term concerts, typically 15-25 minutes in length.
* To lead sectional rehearsals if requested, during normal SUSO rehearsal sessions.
* To have an excellent working knowledge of all the SUSO repertoire each term, not just the piece to be conducted by the AMD in concert, before the term starts.
* To assist the Musical Director however requested during rehearsals, including making notes, helpful comments, and suggestions to both the MD and the players.
* To assist the Musical Director however requested in the planning of rehearsals, including but not limited to: rehearsal scheduling, preparation of parts and scores, distribution of notes or messages to players.
* To collaborate professionally and enthusiastically with the Musical Director, President, and other committee members with general planning of SUSO projects.
* To collaborate with the committee in the organisation of the Preterm week in September 2021.
* To conduct rehearsals and performance in the Preterm week in September 2021, typically the week before Fresher’s week.
* Potentially to organise and conduct a lunchtime concert of a small ensemble, made up of SUSO members, during the second term in advance of and as a publicity vehicle for SUSO’s main concert. This would be with the support of the committee and Musical Director.
* To be part of the Artistic Planning Committee, along with the President, Musical Director, Leader, Librarian, and Treasurer.
* To be present at the audition session for the new Leader and the new AMD, at the end of the summer term.
* To be present on the audition panel for the members at the beginning of the autumn term and to assist the Musical Director, President, and Leader in determining the seating for the orchestra. (Due to COVID-19 the AMD will not be required to sit on the audition panel for the 2020/21 season as they won’t have yet been appointed).
* To attend committee meetings if and when required.

## Person Specification

#### Essential qualities

* Enthusiasm to learn and improve as a conductor
* Dedication to helping get the best out of SUSO
* Good humored and personable
* Good communicator, both verbal and in writing
* Punctual and disciplined
* Patience and understanding when directing other musicians
* Energy and ambition to help get the best out of other musicians

#### Desirable qualities

* Previous orchestral or other conducting experience
* Previous teaching or coaching experience, with individuals or small groups
* Wide-ranging knowledge and understanding of the standard symphony orchestra repertoire
* A high level of instrumental playing or singing ability
* Enthusiasm to be involved with SUSO’s social activities

## Selection process

1. Prospective candidates are asked to fill in the following **online application form** <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd_1ommy1K-kpbMy7moHtPswi203JXAn29JBSryHha2JvHi9w/viewform?usp=sf_link> detailing their past experience and suitability for the role, **by Monday 28th September.**
2. A shortlist will be prepared of a maximum of six candidates who will be invited to a **short interview via Zoom** with the Musical Director, President, and outgoing AMD and Leader. Interviews will take place during the week commencing **Monday 5th October**.
3. Three candidates will be selected to **lead a short rehearsal** of SUSO members playing some straightforward repertoire, which will be made available in advance. All members of SUSO will be welcome to observe this rehearsal. This **rehearsal date is tbc**, dependent on COVID-19 restrictions.
4. The successful candidate will be chosen by the Musical Director and President, with input from the members of SUSO. The successful candidate will be notified **no more than a week after the rehearsal**.

Please note that we operate an equal rights policy, and will not discriminate based upon gender, race, sexuality, religion, age, disability or any other relevant factors.

## Notes

#### Music degree conducting module

* If the AMD is also hoping to use a SUSO performance as an assessment for their Conducting module as part of their degree course then this is perfectly possible.
* The AMD must make this clear from the start of their tenure. The repertoire used for the assessment must be agreed in advance but just also be judged to be appropriate and in line with SUSO’s objectives.
* If the AMD is being assessed with the orchestra then the committee and Musical Director will do everything possible to ensure this works well, but cannot guarantee to put programming for the assessment ahead of the best interests of the orchestra.