



**Musical Director/Conductor Recruitment  
November 2017  
Candidate Information Pack**

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## Background information about the National Children's Choir of Great Britain

The National Children's Choir of Great Britain (NCCGB) was founded in 1998 by Lissa Gray, an experienced musician and educator. Her vision was to bring together talented young singers and enable them to work with committed and enthusiastic professionals in a nurturing environment.

From the choir's first concert, the Millennium Youth Prom, when there were 38 members, the organisation has grown to a membership of 250+ from throughout the UK. Entry into the choir is by audition only, and candidates are auditioned in the autumn to join the following Easter.

There are three Junior (treble) choirs:

The Yellow Choir	for children aged 9 – Year 6
The Blue Choir	for young people from Year 7 – Year 10
The Green Choir	for young people from Year 8 – Year 10. The Green Choir is for the most advanced Junior choristers, with a high level of sight reading ability and musical acumen.

And the Senior Choir, for girls Year 10+ and boys with changed voices.

## Courses, concerts and other activities

The choirs meet twice each year for residential courses, at Easter and in the Summer just after the end of the school term. At Easter, the Junior Choirs meet for 6 days; the Senior Choir meets for 4 days, taking into consideration commitment to public exams. In the summer, both choirs meet for 6 days.

Currently the courses take place at Shrewsbury School and it is planned that they will continue to do so until at least 2020. The school offers an appropriate range of facilities, including rehearsal rooms for four or five choirs and teaching rooms for the individual singing lessons every choir member enjoys during a course.

2018 course dates are:

Easter	Junior Choirs & Tour Choir	1 <sup>st</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup> April
	Senior Choir	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup> April
Summer	Non-tour choirs	4 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> August
	Tour Choir (in China)	29 <sup>th</sup> July – 8 <sup>th</sup> August
	Tour Choir (in Shrewsbury)	8 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> August

Provisional dates for 2019 are:

Easter	Junior Choirs	14 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> April
	Senior Choir	16 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> April
Summer	All choirs	28 <sup>th</sup> July – 3 <sup>rd</sup> August

Each year, the summer course culminates in a public concert. In 2018 this will take place in Birmingham Town Hall, and the programme will include the première of a work commissioned from Cecilia McDowall in celebration of the choir's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

From time to time, choir members tour; in 2004, they visited Australia & New Zealand; in 2008, Canada & the US; in 2012, Italy; in 2016, Spain; and in 2018 a tour choir will sing in Beijing and Shanghai. It is planned that the next tour, which will be European, will take place in 2020.

From time to time members of NCCGB perform between courses; participation in such events is voluntary.

## **Management of the choir**

NCCGB is overseen by a board of trustees, who act as a 'critical friend' to the choir. The trustees meet three times a year to discuss the progress of the choir, major financial decisions and choir development.

The day to day running of NCCGB is the responsibility of the General Manager, who reports to the trustees. The General Manager attends all trustees' meetings.

The Musical Director will report to General Manager and will attend the Annual General Meeting of the trustees.

## **Current staffing**

### **Music team**

Currently, the choirs are conducted by:

Dan Ludford Thomas (Senior Choir), who is also Interim Artistic Director

Suzzie Vango (Blue Choir)

Rachel Smith (Yellow Choir)

The Green Choir is conducted by conductors from other choirs, and it is anticipated that a new Musical Director may wish to work with this group.

Each conductor is supported by an assistant conductor, and each choir has a dedicated pianist.

### **Pastoral team**

As a residential activity, it is essential that we have a strong pastoral team to ensure the choir members' well-being throughout the course. The pastoral carers supervise the choirs outside rehearsal time, and each choir has a pastoral team in place during rehearsals to help when needed.

The pastoral care team includes a course nurse.

## **Repertoire**

NCCGB repertoire is very varied, and includes both sacred and secular items. Each conductor suggests items for both their own and other choirs, and the conductors meet in January to decide on the repertoire for the year ahead. It will be the responsibility of the new Musical Director to ensure that this process leads to a cohesive repertoire for the choir which will inspire members and help them to develop their skills.

## **Musical Director/Conductor Job Description**

This document describes the duties and responsibilities of the Musical Director of the National Children's Choir of Great Britain (NCCGB) for the duration of his/her employment with the choir. This Job Description may be changed from time to time as deemed necessary to meet the requirements of the choir.

The choir's annual timetable runs from October to September, the organisation's financial year end. The year commences with auditions in the autumn; in March/April the Easter course takes place, followed by the summer course late July/August which ends with the annual concert. Further musical events involving the MD may take place, subject to prior agreement.

Choice of repertoire and concert programming is discussed between the conductors of all NCCGB choirs; the MD makes the final decision on both repertoire and programming. The choice of repertoire and programming will

be consistent with the skills and development of the NCCGB membership; it must aim to provide challenge, variety and enjoyment. It will also consider the engagement of the audience.

NCCGB may on occasion wish to publicise its work and performances. Such publicity may include (without limitation) photographs, interviews, audio and video recording of selected rehearsals and performances. The Musical Director will allow such activities and make a reasonable effort to participate in marketing efforts as well as being an advocate for the choir and assisting with fundraising events.

### **Specific duties. The Musical Director will:**

- Provide the choir with musical direction to develop the skills and abilities of its members and achieve the highest possible musical standards, while ensuring that all choir activities are an enjoyable experience for everyone involved.
- Attend all courses and related concerts; other events to be attended by prior agreement.
- In consultation with the other conductors, plan and agree the annual music programme for the choir. This programme should balance challenge, enjoyment and musical development for all singers, while also considering the practicalities of ability, budgets and audience appeal.
- Help create a long-term vision for the development of the choir alongside the trustees and the general manager.
- Help the general manager to seek and provide opportunities for the choir to take part in different musical experiences either alongside or as part of the standard course schedule.
- Attend the AGM of the NCCGB trustees, and other meetings if required.
- Help develop, advocate for and participate in activities that promote NCCGB, including fundraising.
- Work with the general manager to ensure that the costs for music and other expenses remain within budget limitations.
- Work with nominated NCCGB staff members in the preparation and staging of concerts.
- Be an ambassador for the choir, promoting NCCGB in any way possible.

Pay will be as specified in the employment agreement between NCCGB and the Musical Director.

### **Person specification**

Please ensure that you have all these essential requirements before submitting an application.

- Recent choral conducting experience, especially with children and young people.
- Experience of working as a musical director, overseeing the development and progression of a choir.
- Extensive knowledge of the choral repertoire, specifically items suitable for children and young people.
- An advanced understanding of young and developing voices and vocal health.
- The ability to engage with audiences.
- The ability to inspire and enthuse singers of varying ages and experience, with a wide range of personalities and approaches.
- The ability to make rehearsals and concerts a rewarding and enjoyable experience.
- The ability and experience to manage the choir's repertoire and its development.
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all choir members.
- The ability to work collaboratively with a highly enthusiastic and committed team.
- Effective preparation and organisational skills.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Reliability and commitment in all aspects of the role.

Formal conductor training is desirable but not essential.

## Contractual information

- If you work for NCCGB as an employed person, your PAYE and National Insurance contributions will be deducted from your pay. If you are self-employed, you will have to present a monthly invoice that includes your UTR, and will be responsible for your own income tax, VAT and National Insurance contributions.
- The engagement will commence from October 2018.
- There will be a probationary period of six months. The appointment will be subject to review after the first course and at the end of the first year.
- If approved, thereafter you will be on a renewable three yearly agreement.
- Either party may give to the other no fewer than six months' notice of their intention not to renew the contract.
- Either party may terminate the agreement immediately if the other commits any serious or permanent breach of these terms.
- NCCGB may terminate your engagement immediately if sickness or injury prevents you fulfilling your duties for 60 consecutive days.
- Remuneration consists of a monthly consultancy fee/salary, plus a fee/salary per day for courses, auditions and other events.
- Remuneration will be reviewed periodically in the light of the choir's finances.

## Making an application

The timetable for the application process will be as follows:

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|------------------------|---|
| • Application deadline | 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2018                      |
| • Shortlisting         | 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2018                     |
| • Interviews           | 20 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2018 |
| • Auditions            | Week commencing 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2018       |
| • Appointment          | by 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2018                     |

### To submit an application:

Please apply by email, including the completed application form, a CV and an application letter which outlines your vision for the choir, how you will satisfy the requirements of the job description and your fee requirements.

If you would like an informal chat before submitting your application, please email us and we will arrange for this to take place with our General Manager, Kim Reffell.

Applications should be emailed to [trustees@nccgb.com](mailto:trustees@nccgb.com) by midnight on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018. You should receive an automated acknowledgement; if this has not reached you by Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January, please contact Kim Reffell on [info@nccgb.com](mailto:info@nccgb.com).

### Interviews and auditions

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview in Slough on either Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February. Following these interviews, three candidates will be shortlisted for auditions during the week commencing 12<sup>th</sup> March; these candidates will be asked to work with a youth choir previously unknown to them, at a rehearsal arranged by NCCGB.