

B BERKELEY ENSEMBLE



Financial Trustee Information and Application Pack

Berkeley Ensemble

The Berkeley Ensemble was formed by friends in a spirit of adventure. ‘An instinctive collective’ (*The Strad*), its members have come together from diverse corners of musical life to make music in new ways, reach new audiences and, most importantly, explore new repertoire, be it newly written or inadvertently forgotten.

Its acclaimed performances and recordings celebrate contemporary chamber music, especially by British composers. Since its founding in 2008 the ensemble has premiered over 40 works commissioned by or written for the group from composers including Michael Berkeley, John Woolrich, Lynne Plowman, Barnaby Martin and Misha Mullov-Abbado. The ensemble also champions unjustly neglected works and has given the first modern performances of pieces by Lennox Berkeley, Alan Bush and Dorothy Howell.

Its eight albums include 18 premiere recordings amongst a diverse catalogue ranging from Knussen to Beethoven and have attracted considerable praise. The ensemble’s recent recording of Beethoven’s Septet was lauded by BBC Radio 3’s Andrew McGregor as ‘inhabit[ing] the heart of this rewarding score with a grace and ease I found totally engaging’ whilst *Lennox Berkeley: Stabat Mater* was nominated for a Gramophone Award in 2017 and praised in the magazine’s initial review for ‘a performance of shimmering intensity’.

The Berkeley Ensemble regularly appears at venues and festivals throughout the UK including Southbank Centre’s Purcell Room, St David’s Hall Cardiff, Wiltshire Music Centre and the Cheltenham, Spitalfields, and Lake District Summer Music Festivals.

The ensemble’s own Little Venice Music Festival provides a unique platform to collaborate and explore whilst engaging and entertaining neighbours of the group’s London base of St. Saviour’s Church, Warwick Avenue. Since taking on the festival’s curatorship in 2016, the ensemble has brought world-class chamber music right into the community, with guest artists including Imogen Cooper, Adrian Brendel and Laura Snowden appearing as soloists and as performers with the ensemble.

Away from the concert platform, the Berkeley Ensemble works tirelessly to foster the creation, appreciation and performance of chamber music at every age, level and ability. Recent highlights have included collaborations with both PRS for Music and Tŷ Cerdd on professional development schemes for composers, as well as the release in 2019 of the first commercial recording of winning scores from the ensemble’s New Cobbett Prize for composition. For amateur performers, the group runs a chamber course in Somerset, as well as a series of study days in London.

Residencies and associations with schools allow the ensemble to help create and develop musical communities of lasting and ever-deepening value. The ensemble is particularly proud of its longstanding links with Ibstock Place School in Barnes, the David Ross Education Trust and Meath Primary School near Woking.

Visit berkeleyensemble.co.uk and littlevenice-mf.com for further information.

Role overview

The Berkeley Ensemble's board plays a central role in the life of the organisation. It comprises expert individuals who support a small and committed freelance team of eight musicians and a General Manager. Now in its second decade, the ensemble is seeking to diversify the governance of the charity and invite in new voices from a wider range of backgrounds in order to help shape its future. We are currently seeking a trustee with expertise in finance and accountancy.

Key responsibilities

Working as a trustee with the Berkeley Ensemble you will:

- Use your professional skills and networks to support and influence the success of the Berkeley Ensemble's ambitious annual programme of concert and education activity
- Contribute actively to the board of trustees, giving firm strategic direction in setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- Act as an ambassador for the group, attending its performances and meeting supporters and audience members

Principal duties as a financial trustee

- Assist and advise the board on the sound financial management of the charity
- Attend (on average) four meetings a year, online and occasionally in person in central London
- Prepare and present financial reports for trustees' meetings, with assistance from the administrator (we currently use Xero for accounting and reporting)
- Prepare an annual financial report for submission to the Charity Commission (with assistance from the administrator and other members of the ensemble admin team)

Personal specification

Required:

- Professional financial or accountancy qualifications or experience
- Proven ability to communicate and explain financial information to members of the board and other stakeholders
- A willingness to be available to the ensemble's admin team for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis

Desirable:

- Knowledge and understanding of current financial practice relevant to charities and relevant duties under the Charities Act
- Knowledge of Xero or similar online accountancy software

Terms

Newly appointed trustees will serve a term of three years on the board unless a different fixed term is agreed. Membership, via further three-year terms, may be renewed up to three times at the end of each term by mutual agreement.

Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, all board meetings took place in central London on weekday evenings. The charity is keen to explore other ways and times of meeting, particularly online. Interested applicants for whom an evening commitment in London may be impractical are encouraged to get in touch to discuss their circumstances.

The role of trustee with the Berkeley Ensemble is voluntary and therefore no remuneration is provided. Reimbursement of reasonable expenses for those travelling to attend meetings and ensemble events in person is available.

How to apply

Expressions of interest, consisting of a letter outlining your relevant experience and reasons for interest in the role along with your CV, should be sent via email to the current chair, Dan Shilladay, at dan@berkeleyensemble.co.uk. If you are interested in joining the board and would like a preliminary conversation with a board member, please get in touch with Dan who will arrange this.

The Berkeley Ensemble is a registered charity in England & Wales, no. 1145392. A copy of our latest accounts can be viewed on the [Charity Commission website](#). Visit our website to read our [privacy policy](#).