



SINFONIA
SMITH SQ.

ORGAN FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION PACK 2025/26



We are looking for a talented emerging organist to join our 2025/26 Fellowship and embark on a life-changing experience that promises to transform your prospects.

A beacon for the future of classical music, Sinfonia Smith Square is the coming together of two much-loved organisations: Southbank Sinfonia and St John's Smith Square.

Every year, we invite 34 musicians from all over the world to be part of Sinfonia Smith Square's renowned ten-month fellowship programme, designed to prepare emerging musicians for all aspects of professional musical life.

Applicants should be able to play the piano and organ to a high standard and have completed an undergraduate or postgraduate music degree either at music college or university, or achieved an equivalent musical qualification.

This is a part-time Fellowship placement and opportunities will change from year to year, but we expect the Fellowship to involve:

- Giving 3 lunchtime recitals as part of our Lunchtime Concert series
- Exploring further opportunities for organ concerts that use the organ in non-traditional ways
- Performing at c.6 orchestral concerts with the full orchestra. This will usually require 2 or 3 days for each concert for rehearsal time
- Attend the Anghiari Festival (in Italy) for part of the week
- Support our schools learning and participation programme across the year
- Engage with other opportunities within the organisation eg. performing at private events, weddings, and other concerts and festivals
- Attend and gain professional development support through the Fellowship Welcome Week, residential course and other artist development workshops and training sessions

This placement will be supported by our Organist in Residence, Roger Sayer, who will provide lessons throughout the year and the opportunity for you to shadow him at concerts.

The organ at Smith Square Hall (formerly St John's Smith Square) is a Klais organ, and was installed in 1991. It is available for rehearsal 3 times a week, twice on weekdays and once at the weekend from 6am to 9am. This will be on a flexible basis if required.

We are often asked if it is possible to be in Sinfonia Smith Square while still studying at music college or university. Owing to the intensity of the programme, this is not normally practical so we strongly recommend you wait until your final year to apply so that your time with us follows your graduation. Please see [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on our website (sinfoniasmithsq.org.uk) for more information about this.

Sinfonia Smith Square is committed to improving equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation. We therefore actively seek applications from individuals with backgrounds currently underrepresented in the arts. We welcome applications from all sections of the community, regardless of age, disability, gender identity or gender expression, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other equality characteristic.

This pack is your simple step-by-step guide to completing your initial application and the rest of the process. Please take the time to read it fully.

You must submit a completed application form by Friday 10 January 2025. Selected applicants are then invited to audition in March/ April and interview in April/May.

If you have any queries about the programme or the audition process, please do not hesitate to contact us via auditions@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk or call one of our team on 020 4553 0758 who will be very happy to give advice.

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments in the application and recruitment process for the Fellowship. If we can support you with the application process in any way, or you require assistance at any stage, please contact us.

YOUR APPLICATION

To apply, visit 'Apply' under 'Our Orchestra' on our website (sinfoniasmithsq.org.uk) and follow the link to the online application portal. If you applied last year, you can log back in to the system using the same email address and password - or follow the link to reset your password if required.

Completed applications must be submitted to us by the closing date:

12:00 noon (Greenwich Mean Time) on Friday 10 January 2025

Your application consists of two parts:

- Video footage
- A written application form

We regret that we cannot accept late applications.

VIDEO FOOTAGE

All applicants are required to submit recently filmed footage playing either a piece of solo or accompanied classical repertoire, recorded with an accompanist if possible. This can be anything from baroque through to contemporary music. We welcome and encourage you to consider repertoire from a diverse range of composers. You can either specially film it or it can be from a solo performance you have recently filmed, but the audio should all be from the same performance, not digitally edited, and one continuous take. The footage should be no longer than five minutes. In order to standardise applications, we ask that you please do not use professional recording equipment but do ensure the footage is of good quality and represents your ability as a musician.

Please note we cannot accept purely audio recordings; it must be filmed footage in which you are clearly visible.

UPLOADING YOUR VIDEO

You should upload the footage to the internet using YouTube, Vimeo or an equivalent which makes it instantly accessible (rather than something that requires a download or password), then include the link to it in your application form. Wherever possible, please ensure the composer and title of the piece you are playing are included in the video's title or description.

The footage should remain fully accessible online until the end of our recruitment process in May. Before sending us the link, please check that your footage is definitely visible, ensuring that you have deactivated privacy settings so that we can view it easily.

If there is any reason why your circumstances may not enable you to submit filmed footage as described above, please contact us at auditions@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk.

TIPS FOR VIDEO FOOTAGE

Please do not submit a professional, studio produced video. The most important thing is that your playing is well represented. If you are specially filming for your application, there are a few easy tips to consider when creating your footage which will help you to present yourself in the best possible way.

Use a room with a good acoustic

We recommend using a digital camera or phone camera

Listen back with a good pair of headphones to check you are happy with the sound quality. It doesn't have to be of professional quality, but should allow the listener to easily and clearly hear your playing

Use a tripod, or place your camera/phone on a flat surface, so your footage is stable

Ensure that you can be seen in the frame, not so close that any of you is cropped out but not too far back either. We need to be able to clearly see that it is you playing.

APPLICATION FORM

As demand for places is high, we regret that we cannot audition everyone who applies. We therefore strongly recommend that you take time to complete the application form in detail, giving the best possible representation of yourself. Your application form must be written in English. Everything we need is in the online application form, so please do not submit a CV in addition to this.

We encourage you to take your time thinking about and answering the first three written questions, as these will form an important part of your application along with your video footage. Required questions within the application form are marked with an *. Without information in these fields, you will not be able to submit your application. Beyond this, we recommend you complete as many questions as are relevant to you to give yourself the best possible chance.

You do not have to complete the application form in one session. Once you have created your account, you can save progress on your application and return to it later, up until the closing date. If you do plan to return to complete your form at a later date, make sure to save any progress before logging out.

In the 'Referees' section, please provide the details for two people who we may contact for their view of your accomplishments and potential as a musician. Please notify them that you are providing their details. The first should be your most recent teacher; the second may be someone who has employed you as a musician, such as an orchestra manager, fixer or promoter, or another teacher. For 'Role', please state what they do for a living.

NOTIFICATION

Once we have received your complete application, you should receive a confirmation by email within a few hours. You will then hear within a month of the closing date if we are able to invite you for an audition in March.

As all correspondence about applying to Sinfonia Smith Square is by email, it is worth you taking the time now to ensure emails from Sinfonia Smith Square – especially from the addresses auditions@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk and joshua@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk – are approved in your spam filter settings. We also recommend you regularly check your junk mail folder to ensure no emails from us accidentally end up there.

AUDITIONS

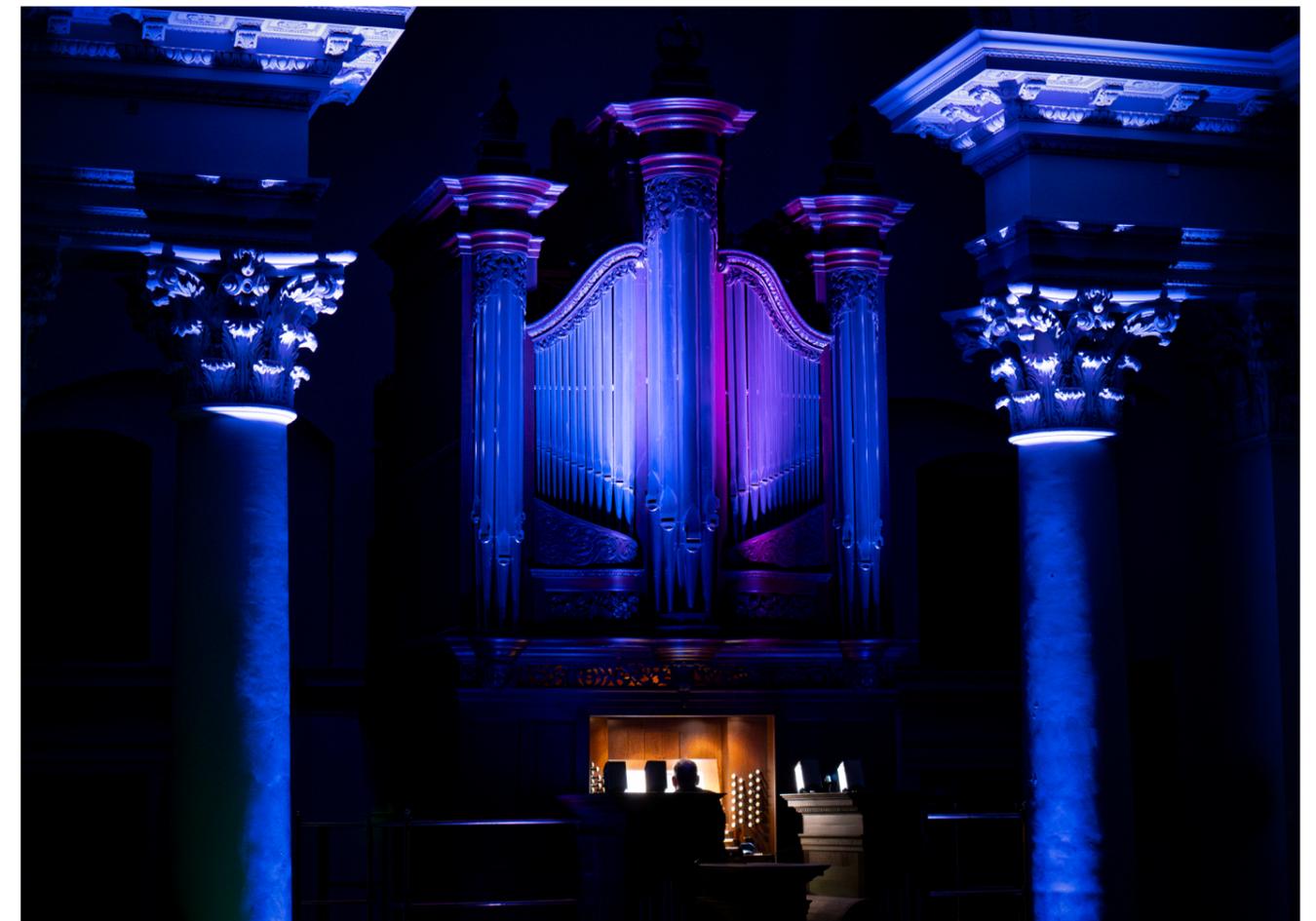
On the basis of your video footage, the information you provide in your application form and your answers to the three written questions, selected applicants will be invited to attend an audition in London. We also hope to hold auditions in New Zealand and Australia, this will be confirmed in January 2025. If it is absolutely not possible for you to audition in London, New Zealand or Australia but you would still like to be considered, please contact auditions@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk giving details of your situation and where you are located, well in advance of the closing date.

Auditions take place in March 2025. If selected for audition, you will be notified individually of the date you are required to attend. We aim to make auditions a friendly and welcoming experience for all candidates. Each panel comprises several colleagues from Sinfonia Smith Square, plus a specialist player from the forefront of the music profession.

Candidates are asked to prepare the following pieces for audition:

- An extract from any piece of your choosing by Bach.
- A contrasting, expressive piece of your choosing that demonstrates how you manage the instrument.
- Three extracts which will be available in advance of the audition, one of which will be for piano.

On the day, you will have the chance to run through key passages of your repertoire before the audition.



INTERVIEWS

Interviews take place in London in April/May 2025, though it is possible for the interview to be conducted via Zoom if you are not resident in the UK. The interview will be with several members of Sinfonia Smith Square's team.

At interview, we will want to hear more about your musical interests and aspirations, and what you would like to achieve in the year ahead. We would also like to hear your thoughts on classical music concerts and music education. It is also your opportunity to ask us questions and find out more about the Sinfonia Smith Square experience. Each interview lasts approximately 20 minutes.

Following interviews, candidates will be notified by the end of May whether they have been successful in attaining a place in Sinfonia Smith Square.

TIPS FOR INTERVIEWS

We aim to make interviews a friendly, positive experience so rest assured we won't be testing you on anything

You don't require your instrument at this stage, but please bring your diary with you to interview as the panel will ask you about potential engagements for the following year

Take the time to familiarise yourself with how Sinfonia Smith Square runs in advance of the interview; you can find lots of information on our website, including a Frequently Asked Questions page, or by talking to anyone you may know who has been in the orchestra previously

This is the ideal opportunity for you to ask the panel anything that is specific to your circumstances or not already answered by the website

FEEDBACK

Anyone attending auditions or interviews is welcome to request feedback on their progress so far and we will aim to give you some insightful and constructive thoughts that we hope will be of use.

If you would like feedback, please email auditions@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk with the following subject heading:

Feedback – Instrument – Forename Surname

This year we will also be offering a small number of places onto a short programme which will provide support and guidance on re-applying to Sinfonia Smith Square and insight into our Fellowship programme. There will be more information about this programme and how to apply as we come towards the end of the fellowship recruitment process.

Owing to the orchestra's commitments and because we want to take the time to send you helpful and focused thoughts, it can sometimes be several weeks before we can send you feedback, so thank you for your patience.

If you have any further queries about the programme or the audition process, please do not hesitate to contact us on auditions@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk. You are also welcome to call one of our team on 020 4553 0758 who will be very happy to provide advice.