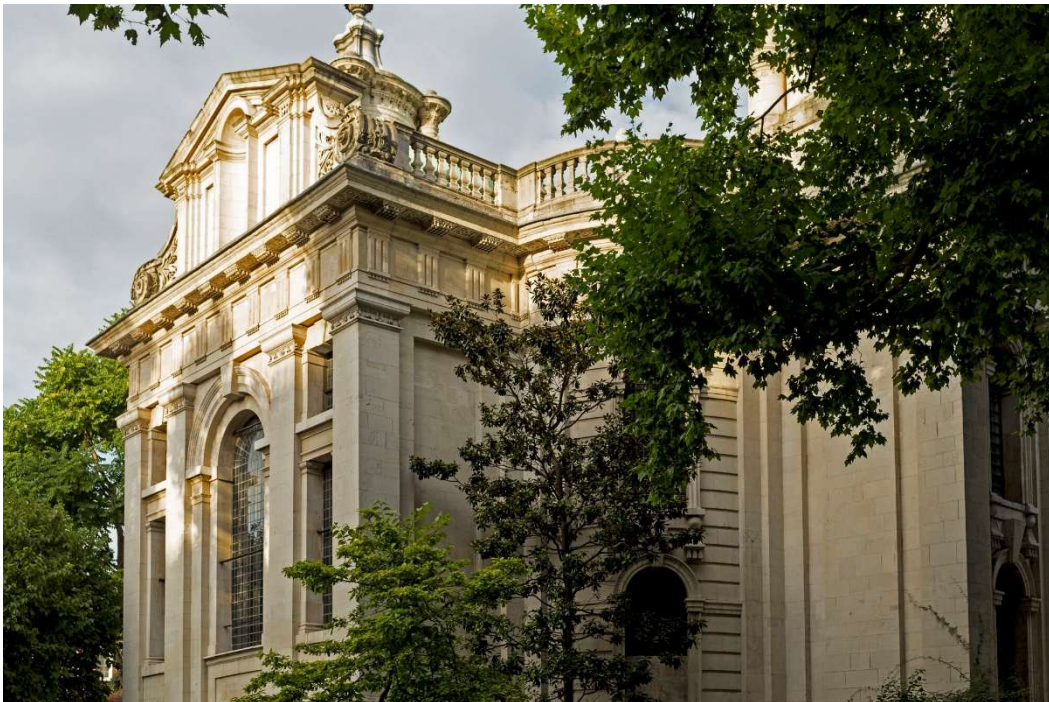


## **The Julia Rausing Trust Awards Grant to Save Iconic Westminster Building**

*Sinfonia Smith Square has been awarded £500,000 from The Julia Rausing Trust in support of its 'Doors Open' capital project to restore the iconic Smith Square Hall.*



### **Friday 12 December 2025**

Sinfonia Smith Square is delighted to announce that it has been awarded £500,000 from The Julia Rausing Trust in support of its 'Doors Open' capital project to restore Smith Square Hall in Westminster.

The £22 million Doors Open project represents a generation-defining investment in the future of the Hall, safeguarding this nationally significant Grade I listed building and renowned concert venue.

Currently on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register, the restoration programme will ensure that the Hall not only survives but thrives for generations to come.

The Julia Rausing Trust's support of Doors Open marks a significant milestone in the campaign, helping Sinfonia Smith Square move closer to realising its vision of a more inclusive, resilient, and environmentally responsible cultural hub for world-class music.

This transformative capital undertaking will begin in 2027, with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Sinfonia Smith Square is working with renowned conservation and performance

architects Burrell Foley Fischer on the project. An application for planning consent has been submitted to Westminster City Council, with a decision expected imminently.

Rosie Fraser, Chief Executive of Sinfonia Smith Square said:

*“This generous grant from the Julia Rausing Trust reflects our shared vision of transforming Smith Square Hall into a world-class home for musicians and audiences for generations to come.*

*The project’s name, Doors Open, captures both our architectural ambitions, and our commitment to offering an accessible, inclusive programme of exceptional music to all that visit. This investment marks a major milestone in delivering that ambition.”*

Anne Dodwell, Director – Arts & Heritage at The Julia Rausing Trust, said:

*“We are delighted to support Sinfonia Smith Square’s ‘Doors Open’ Project, which will not only remove Smith Square Hall off the Heritage At Risk Register, but also revitalise the building into a modern concert and events space in the heart of Westminster. We hope this project inspires new audiences and musicians alike.”*

For more information about the *Doors Open* campaign or to learn how you can support the project, please visit <https://www.sinfoniasmithsq.org.uk/doors-open/> or contact Rosie Fraser, Chief Executive of Sinfonia Smith Square ([rosie@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk](mailto:rosie@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk)).

ENDS

#### **Notes to Editors:**

Full resolution photograph can be downloaded [here](#).

#### **Contact**

For additional imagery and further enquiries, contact: [Press@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk](mailto:Press@sinfoniasmithsquare.org.uk)

Location: Sinfonia Smith Square, Smith Square Hall, London, W1P 3HA

Website: <https://www.sinfoniasmithsq.org.uk/>

Facebook: Sinfonia Smith Square

X: @SinfoniaSmithSq

Instagram: @SinfoniaSmithSq

#### **About Sinfonia Smith Square**

Smith Square Hall, formerly St John’s Smith Square, has been a renowned concert venue since 1969. Today it hosts a year-round programme of events for the broadest audiences, from school workshops and family concerts to an acclaimed international concert programme. At its heart is the Sinfonia Smith Square Fellowship orchestra. Formerly Southbank Sinfonia, the Sinfonia and Hall merged in 2021.

A beacon for the next generation of classical music talent, Sinfonia Smith Square’s musicians are handpicked from around the world to work intensively together for a year. Collaborating with leading artists from across the industry, the musicians benefit from the highest level of training. With over 700 alumni across its 24-year history, Sinfonia musicians can be found in leading orchestras and chamber ensembles, as inspiring music educators, and pioneering their own entrepreneurial musical ventures.

Together, Smith Square Hall and the Sinfonia pioneer a new model: a constantly regenerating orchestra embedded in a centuries-old building. The Hall provides a home for the Sinfonia’s musicians to create new work, take their place amongst a wide community of musicians, and shape the future.

In the coming years, the ambitious *Doors Open* restoration project will revitalise Smith Square Hall, making it fully accessible and welcoming for audiences, performers, guest artists, and future Sinfonia cohorts

### **About The Julia Rausing Trust**

The Julia Rausing Trust has been established in memory of the late British philanthropist Julia Rausing, who died in 2024.

The Julia Rausing Trust will see £100 million donated to charities and organisations in its first year and annually thereafter.

Julia Rausing co-founded The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust in 2014. She was widely known for her unwavering commitment to philanthropy and her impactful contributions to a wide range of UK charitable causes. She was instrumental in building the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust into one of the largest philanthropic funds in the country, donating £400 million to causes across Health, Welfare, and the Arts, primarily within the UK.

The Julia Rausing Trust is a registered charity (number 1213572).

<https://www.julirausingtrust.org>