ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

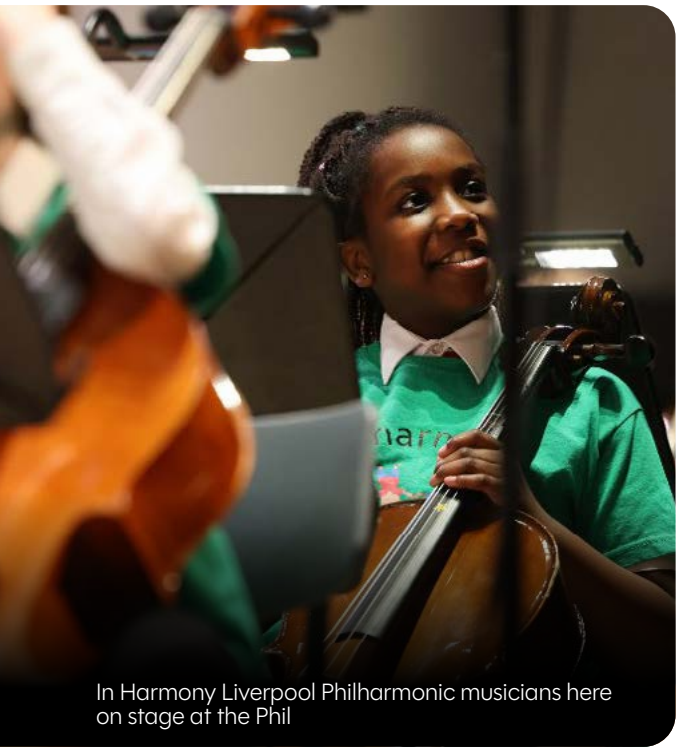
Director of Artistic Programme and Planning

(Orchestra, Choir and Ensembles)

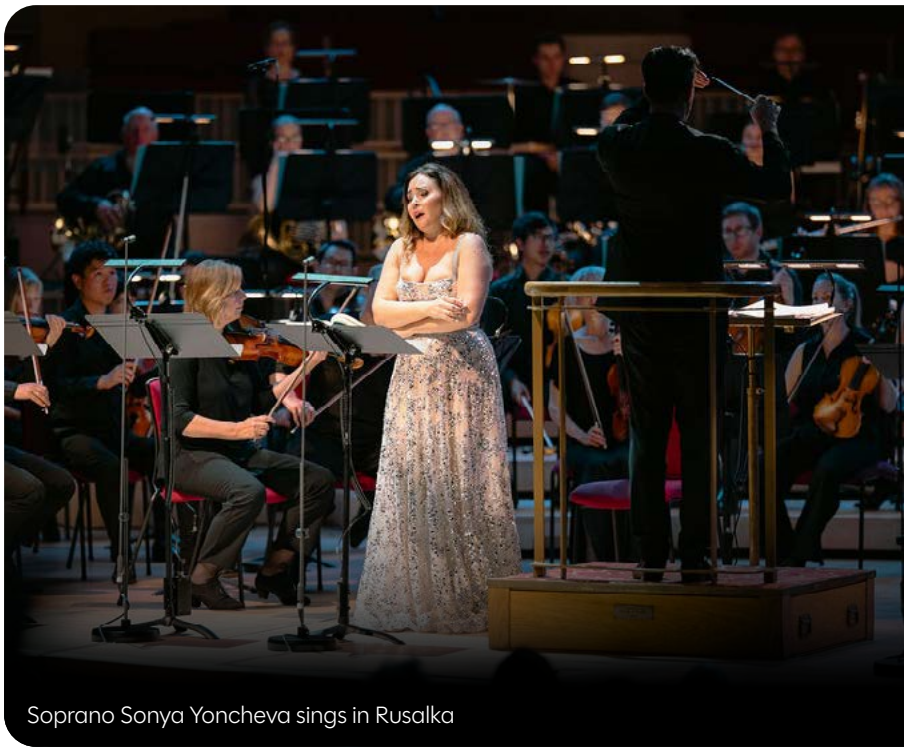
Candidate Information Pack

October 2026

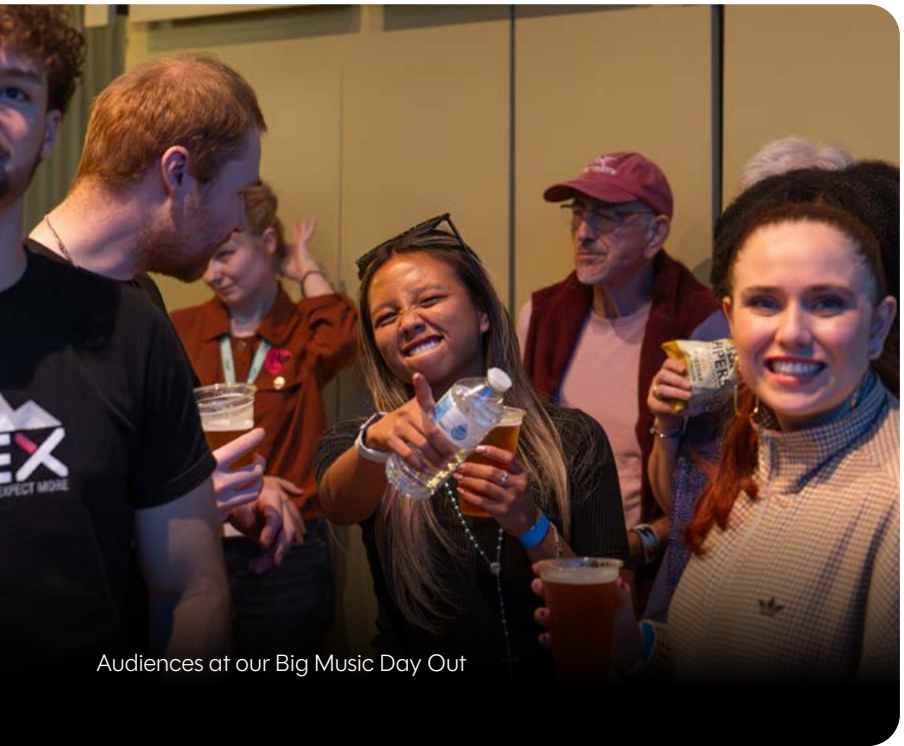
The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra deliver iconic video game soundtracks



In Harmony Liverpool Philharmonic musicians here on stage at the Phil



Soprano Sonya Yoncheva sings in Rusalka



Audiences at our Big Music Day Out

The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir step into the spotlight

Chief Executive's Welcome

Liverpool is one of the world's great music cities: generous in spirit and known internationally for its creativity and civic pride. At its heart, Liverpool Philharmonic brings people together through the power of music, with our much-loved Philharmonic Hall and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra serving as cornerstones of the city's cultural life and the music making opportunities we create resonating across the city region in schools, hospitals and other community settings.

This extraordinary creative canvas, alongside our tours, recordings, and broadcasts, embeds our Orchestra, Choir and ensembles at the heart of our city, while carrying their artistry to audiences far beyond it. We are proud of the quality, commitment and collective knowledge of our outstanding musicians, and of a tradition that combines our classical heritage as the UK's oldest symphony orchestra, with new music, new voices and an evolving range of new experiences in collaboration with partners from our city and beyond.

As we approach our 190th anniversary, we are seeking a new Director of Artistic Programme and Planning who will build on our strengths to shape an exciting next chapter. This is a rare opportunity for a creative, generous and highly accomplished artistic leader to work alongside extraordinary musicians and colleagues, to turn ideas into a sophisticated year-round programme, and to make a bold and distinctive contribution to Liverpool and the UK's musical future. A future that will see us reaching new audiences, strengthening our orchestra's national and international reputation and celebrating our role as artistic partner for the diverse communities we work with in Liverpool, the North West and beyond.

This role calls for someone who is curious and relishes collaboration; someone who will draw on the insight and experience within the Orchestra and wider organisation, while proposing new perspectives and bringing people together around a shared artistic purpose. The successful candidate will combine imagination and confident judgement with the ability to listen well, make choices and turn a wealth of ideas into programmes that are compelling, timely and alive to the possibilities of Liverpool Philharmonic. We hope you will be interested in discussing this opportunity with us.

Vanessa Reed,
Chief Executive, Liverpool Philharmonic

About Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

Liverpool Philharmonic is one of the most ambitious and significant music organisations in the UK, in one of the world's greatest music cities.

First established in 1840, we've been at the centre of Liverpool's cultural life for generations. As a cultural anchor and global ambassador for Liverpool, it's our mission to create powerful, shared music experiences that uplift the spirit and stay with audiences long after the final note fades away.

At our heart is the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the UK's oldest continuing professional symphony orchestra. Our home is the historic Art Deco Liverpool Philharmonic Hall and it's there, alongside our smaller Music Room, that we host over 400 concerts and events each year, connecting Liverpool to the world and ensuring we continue to inspire and grow as a UNESCO City of Music.

Rooted in the city, we're committed to providing musical experiences that reach far beyond our venues. Every day we head out into Liverpool, filling schools, hospitals, community spaces and thousands of lives with music. Our learning and wellbeing programmes are recognised as leaders in their field, benefiting more than 130,000 local people each year.

Looking to the future, we're collaborating with the next generation of artists and audiences to ensure Liverpool continues to thrive as a magical place that has music in its DNA. This includes working with exciting new voices, commissioning new works, backing homegrown talent and providing pathways for artists of all backgrounds who are making their way into the music industry.

In 2025, the Orchestra presented **116 concerts** to over **80,000 people** and released 6 albums. Our orchestra's music was streamed on Spotify almost **32 million times** by more than **8 million people.**

More than **400,000 people** engaged with our work across concerts, events and activities.

Working across more than 45 health and community settings, we reached **5,000 NHS patients and service users.**

Our Orchestra, Choir and Ensembles

The **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra** is a cornerstone of Liverpool's vibrant cultural life. Led by a family of world-class conductors, including our Chief Conductor Domingo Hindoyan, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra gives over 100 performances each season. We regularly share the stage with superstar guest soloists and take Liverpool's sound around the world through sell-out BBC Proms performances, extensive tours and acclaimed recordings.

The **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir** is an auditioned adult symphony chorus. Comprising over 100 singers from across the Northwest region, the Choir was founded in 1840 alongside the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, with the aim of complementing the Orchestra in performances across the nation. The Choir is led by Matthew Hamilton, who was appointed as Director of Choirs and Singing in October 2023.

Liverpool Philharmonic's 10:10 is a contemporary music group – a flexible and rotating collective of musicians from our Orchestra. Taking on the surprising and the exciting, delivering boundary-pushing works and renowned modern classics, each 10:10 performance is a curated showcase of today's contemporary music scene and places a particular emphasis on local talent.

The Orchestra's musicians also perform solo and ensemble recitals in our Music Room Lunchtime and Close Up concert series. Ensembles made up of our orchestral musicians include Equilibrium String Quartet, Klezmer-ish and Bromborough String Quartet.

In 2025 our award-winning In Harmony and Youth Company programmes provided life-changing opportunities for over **2,300 young people.**

We made a national economic contribution of **£70m** and almost **£30m** in social impact.

Recordings

The Orchestra has made a truly impressive collection of recordings – releasing albums featuring works by Beethoven, Vaughan Williams, Tchaikovsky and Bruckner, music from opera, vibrant works from the Americas, and much more besides. We've received stellar reviews in the press, been recognised with Gramophone Classical Music Awards, Royal Philharmonic Society Awards, a BBC Music Magazine Award, and are frequently played on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM. You can explore our recordings here.

Learning and Community Engagement

We're the driving force behind some of the UK's widest-reaching and longest-running music-based youth and community engagement programmes. Through projects such as In Harmony Liverpool Philharmonic and our Music & Health work, more than 130,000 people access music through activities, performances and award-winning partnerships with the NHS, schools and community organisations – giving everyone the chance to develop their passion for music and shape the future of the city region. Find out more about our learning and health programmes here.

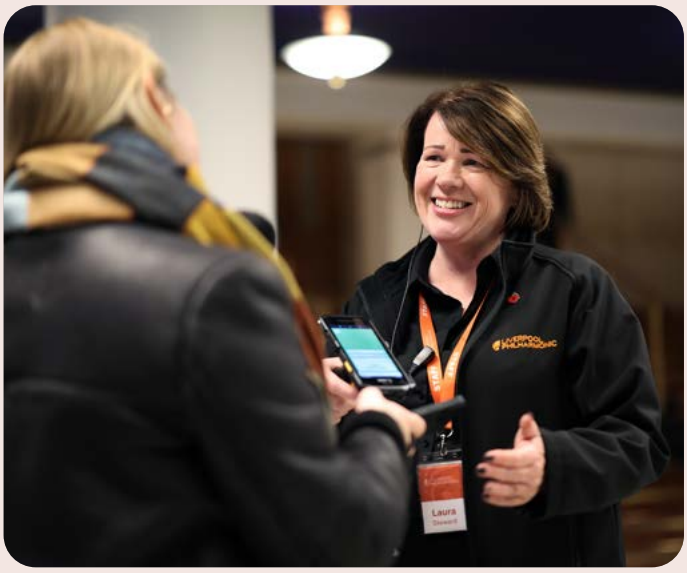
The Organisation

Our work is delivered by a team of 300, ranging from professional musicians to our front-of-house staff. Our turnover is approximately £16.1m per annum. We're one of Arts Council England's largest National Portfolio Organisations and receive significant financial support from Liverpool City Council as the city's largest music sector employer. Around 60% of our income is generated through ticket sales, the venue and other earned income, and we attract around £5.6m through fundraising.

We're committed to increasing the representation and inclusion of diverse communities in our work, team and audiences because we are open to multiple perspectives within, across and beyond our organisation and we believe that artistic quality grows when we recruit from a diverse talent pool.

Liverpool Philharmonic is both a company limited by guarantee and a charity. The Chief Executive is accountable to the Board, which is led by Chair Louise Shepherd CBE (the NHS Regional Director for the North West) and approves the strategic and business plan framework for the organisation.

For more information about Liverpool Philharmonic, visit our website or read our latest Annual Review here. You can also follow the links to our latest published Annual Accounts here.



Equal Opportunities Statement

We champion fairness and inclusion throughout our organisation, our activities, and in the artists and music genres we present.

Our team is a dynamic group of people from all walks of life, united in our passion for music. We want to ensure that everyone feels welcome and everyone can thrive, regardless of who they are and where they are from.

Everyone should feel they belong and so we're committed to developing a more diverse workforce, welcoming applicants with the skills and experience that help us to widen our perspective and better serve the needs of the Liverpool City Region and our communities.

We particularly encourage applications from disabled people, people from the global majority, and people from working-class communities, as these groups are underrepresented in the creative industries.

If you require any adjustments to the recruitment process, please let us know.

Job Specification

Director of Artistic Programme and Planning

Organisation: Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

Location: Liverpool, UK

Reports to: Chief Executive

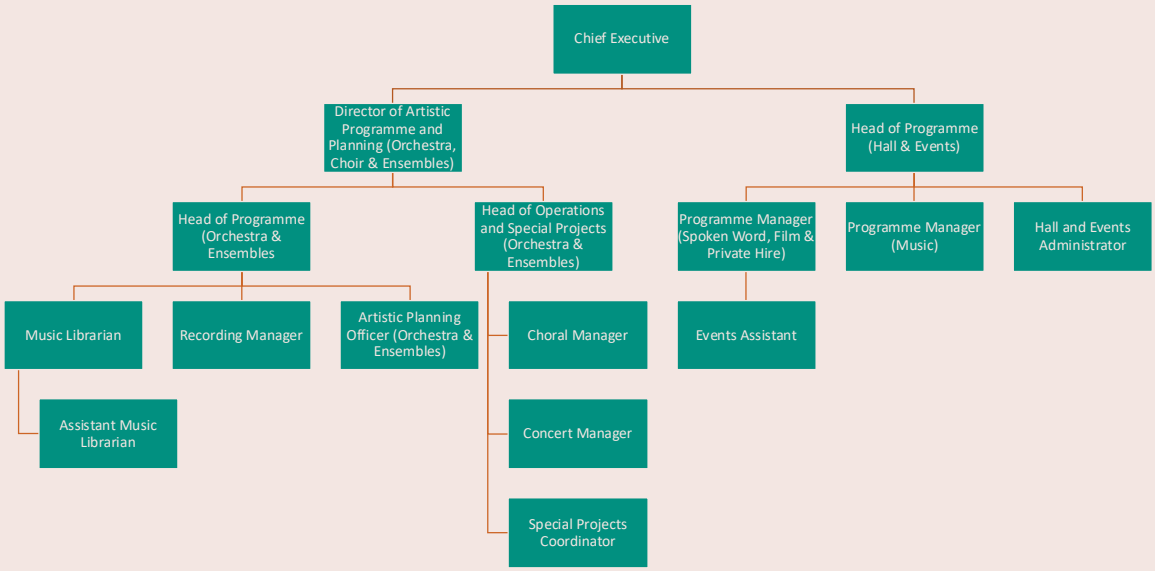
Salary: Competitive, commensurate with experience.

Contract: Full-time, Permanent, with a requirement to regularly attend concerts, events and other activities at Liverpool Philharmonic Hall and in other parts of the UK.

What is the role?

This Director role is responsible for leading the artistic programme and planning of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic's Orchestra, Choir and ensembles. Working in close partnership with the Chief Executive, titled and guest conductors, our full-time salaried musicians, artistic planning colleagues and the wider Executive Team, the postholder will establish and implement an ambitious, coherent and financially sustainable strategy for concert programming, commissions, recordings, broadcast, tours, residencies and partnerships.

The role requires sophisticated artistic judgement: balancing genres, repertoire, scale and pacing through and across seasons; protecting the distinctive live experience in the hall; and making astute use of recording and broadcast opportunities to extend artistic reach, audience engagement and income. It combines a clear long-term vision with collaborative, transparent leadership, open and timely communication with colleagues and musicians, and the ability to turn plans into excellent delivery for audiences, musicians and the organisation.



Key Functions and Responsibilities

Artistic and Strategic Leadership

- Design, lead and implement a bold artistic and commercial vision for Liverpool Philharmonic's Orchestra, Choir and ensembles, in alignment with the organisation's mission, values and strategic goals to 2030. Ensure that artistic ambition, audience development, financial resilience and the effective use of organisational assets are considered together. Please read our Strategic Plan here.

- Develop a coherent, year-round programme that balances artistic distinction, audience relevance and financial viability, with careful attention to repertoire mix, scale, pacing and timing.

- Curate new projects including cross-genre partnerships, festival formats and programme ideas that reflect an inclusive, international vision, openness to new perspectives and a sophisticated understanding of how programming choices, context and timing can deepen artistic impact and audience connection.

- Build a diverse family of outstanding titled conductors and artists in residence, visiting artists and conductors, in consultation with the CEO and Artistic Research Committee.

- Review, devise and deliver a new chapter of the Liverpool Philharmonic's work with living composers in alignment with our reputation as one of the most prolific programmers of new work. This includes the future direction of Liverpool Philharmonic's 10:10 new music group and our commissioning strategy for Orchestra, ensembles, choir and youth company.

- Secure a regular and consistent programme of tours and residencies to strengthen national and international profile and support our city's global priorities.

- Develop and lead an impactful, strategic and financially viable programme of recordings, broadcast and digital activity, ensuring that it serves artistic purpose, international reach, audience development and income generation. Create appropriate space within the schedule for commercial recording activity, while maintaining the right balance between recording ambitions and the live experience and operational demands of the concert hall.

- Lead the development of new and existing partnerships in the UK and internationally with promoters, agents, local stakeholders, venues, arts organisations, festivals, broadcasters, recording companies and potential funders.

- Maintain a close, open and constructive relationship with the Orchestra musicians and support teams, including regular dialogue with player representatives through established committees and steering groups. Draw actively on the experience, knowledge and ideas of musicians in developing the artistic programme; work with Orchestra Leaders and Management to support musicians' recruitment and development, and the best use of musicians' time, with due regard to rehearsal patterns, repertoire mix, performance quality and the MU Collective Agreement.

- Review the rationale and impact of our chamber music series and small ensembles programme and their benefits to musicians, audiences and our organisation.

Audiences, Young People and Cross-Departmental Work

- Develop a multi-year strategy for performances and collaborations that reach new and younger (under 45) audiences; this includes convergences with film, gaming and digital media and a review of past and current collaborations with non-classical and Liverpool-associated artists.

- Support our goal to be one of the UK's most progressive music organisations enabling diverse talent and perspectives to flourish across all aspects of our programme.

- Lead and champion cross-departmental strategies for programme development, ensuring open and collaborative processes, early engagement and timely sharing of information with colleagues and orchestral players.

- Oversee effective scheduling across departments including titled and guest artists' engagement with communications and media and integration of learning activities within the artistic programme.

- Work with the Executive and Learning teams to define artistic priorities, production values and thematic frameworks for our family concerts, schools and Youth Company programmes.

Department Leadership

- Provide direction, motivation and purpose to the artistic planning team, ensuring that the department's work aligns with the Philharmonic's policies, strategic priorities and vision.

- Develop and model a positive and collaborative team culture; lead robust and transparent concert-planning protocols, enabling artistic planning staff at all levels to connect with and share information across departments, including timely communication with orchestral players.

- Be responsible for departmental budget-setting including income generation and financial controls, agreeing targets with the CEO and CFO.

- Oversee key departmental responsibilities including contracts and fee negotiations with guest and titled artists, timely dissemination of schedules, artist and agent liaison and rehearsal logistics.

- Model our values of collaboration, care, curiosity, innovation and having fun.

Person Specification

Experience

- Successful background in the classical music or wider music sector of establishing a compelling artistic vision which serves multiple, diverse audiences.
- Experience of working successfully and empathetically with orchestras and ensembles or within equivalent contexts.
- Entrepreneurial flair in generating new ideas and formats which contribute to audience development, storytelling, innovation, income generation and brand awareness.
- Experience of commissioning new work and devising bold and engaging contemporary music programmes.
- Proven ability to lead on the recruitment and relationship management of titled conductors and artists, building productive, long-term, creative partnerships.
- Artistic leadership at a senior level in a complex music organisation, demonstrating awareness of international trends and opportunities.
- Exceptional budget management skills and proven achievement of financial targets.
- Experience of negotiating with national and international agents, artists and promoters.

Knowledge, Skills and Competencies

- Deep and current understanding of classical and other areas of music, including symphonic repertoire, artists, and conductors.
- Appetite for innovation including new and emerging technologies; ability to lead and inspire others to follow new approaches to orchestral programming and presentation.
- An open and transparent approach to collaboration with Board, the Chief Executive and across departments.
- Capacity to think big and plan for the long term whilst being pragmatic and delivering artistic, audience and financial success.
- Strong UK and international network of music/performing arts/cultural sector contacts including agents, managers, and presenting venues.
- Leads, motivates and empowers teams of creative people.
- Plans, prioritises and works effectively under pressure, promoting systems and processes which strengthen teamwork and collaboration.
- Can work regularly out of hours and travel, as required.

Personal attributes

- A collaborative, confident, and imaginative leader.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with a collegiate and open approach to generating ideas.
- Strong commitment to and understanding of inclusion, belonging and accessibility.
- Pro-active, can-do attitude with a problem-solving approach.
- Well organised, flexible and effective in project and team management.
- Convincing and diplomatic as advocate for the organisation's values.
- Passionate believer in the power of music in learning, health and wellbeing.
- Financially astute and realistic in the deployment and securing of resources.
- High personal and professional integrity.

Please note: This job description reflects the current position. It does not preclude change or development that may be required in the future.

Terms and Conditions

Salary: Competitive, commensurate with experience.

Place of work: Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, with an expectation to be present on-site across a range of hours including normal office hours, as well as evenings and weekends.

The postholder will be expected to regularly attend concerts, events and other activities both at Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, Music Room and other spaces, and to attend events at partner venues and concert halls; they will be expected to travel within the UK and, from time to time, internationally.

Holidays: 26 days per annum plus statutory bank holidays.

Other Benefits

Pensions: Access to a Group Personal Pension Scheme, with an employer contribution of 4.75%

Training and Development: We offer a dedicated training and development fund to support the growth and progression of our employees.

Health Cash Plan: Following two years' service you will have access to a health cash plan with an external supplier. This provides cash back towards everyday healthcare bills and a range of other wellbeing benefits.

Discounted Staff Parking: Access to reduced price parking (subject to availability) in car park operated by Liverpool Philharmonic for employees who choose to drive in to work.

Rail services: Access to the Mersey travel Season Ticket enabling the cost of annual season ticket to be spread over a period of 12 months.

Cycle to work: Cycle to Work Scheme that offers discounts on a bike and accessories, with the cost spread over a period of 12 months.

Flexible Working: Working from home policy available to members of the team where the role allows. Further information is available.

How to apply

To apply, please send a CV and a covering letter stating why you think you are suitable for this role to our recruitment consultant, Helen Sprott, Managing Director of AEM International at applications@aeminternational.co.uk Letters should be no longer than two pages. All applications will be acknowledged.

The deadline for applications is 5pm on Friday 6 November

If you would like a confidential conversation about the role, please contact Helen via email at hsprott@aeminternational.co.uk If you require any access support or reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process, please contact Helen using the email address above.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Monitoring
Collecting EDI data helps us accurately build a picture of the makeup of our workforce We use this information to:

- Understand where we're doing well and where we may need to do more to remove barriers
- Make sure our work reflects and serves the needs of the Liverpool City Region and our communities.

As part of your submission, please complete our EDI monitoring form: Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) monitoring – Fill out form.

The information you give plays no part in the selection process. Your individual responses are not visible to managers, or decision makers.

GDPR personal data notice
According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Due diligence
Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

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liverpoolphil.com

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