



# ULSTER ORCHESTRA

*Let's Play*



## Tutti 1<sup>st</sup> Violin

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 14<sup>th</sup> September 2025

### PRINCIPAL FUNDERS



**Belfast**  
City Council

**What we do:** We connect fantastic music and musicians to the people of Northern Ireland and beyond.

**Who we are:** We are 63 top class musicians, together with our administrative team, one of Northern Ireland's most cherished cultural organisations.

**At the heart of our communities:** Our musicians routinely devote time every week for community engagement; you can find us in care homes, hospitals and hospices, spreading solace and joy to patients and residents and our musicians also provide vital high-level support for talented youngsters.

**Our philosophy:** The best orchestras create great inspirational concerts and also draw from their communities, by reflecting their cultures, their hopes and dreams. They help their communities find their creative voices; that is what we are about.

<b>Job Title:</b>	Tutti 1 <sup>st</sup> Violin
<b>Reporting To:</b>	Orchestra Manager
<b>Type of Post:</b>	Permanent Full-time
<b>Salary:</b>	£32,612.46 per annum
<b>Location:</b>	Belfast, Northern Ireland

---

## JOB DESCRIPTION

---

The purpose of the role is to sit as Tutti 1<sup>st</sup> Violin and to play as required by orchestration and work in accordance with the UO/MU Orchestras Agreement. In addition to playing in the section in a diverse range of orchestral activities, the successful candidate will have the opportunity to attend auditions and sit on appointment panels, participate in chamber music, and take part in Learning and Community Engagement activity. Opportunities also exist for players to create and lead their own non-orchestral activity.

Candidates will ideally have experience of performing in symphony orchestras and evidence through their application excellence in performance to a professional standard. UO will also consider candidates who are in the early stages of their career and can clearly show potential to fulfil the role.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Play in the 1<sup>st</sup> Violin section, always showing musical excellence
- Be fully prepared and familiar with programmed repertoire in advance of rehearsals, recordings and performances
- To sit up and/or play in any seat indicated in the Section, as required
- Follow the performance directions of the Section Leader, Principal, Orchestra Leader and/or Conductor



- Participate constructively in the Orchestra recruitment process including representing the section on audition and trial panels
- Proactively liaise with the Orchestra Manager on musical or artistic performance issues within the Orchestra
- Collaborate constructively and maintain positive working relationships with other players within your section and with other members of the organisation, including the administration, other orchestral colleagues and any freelance players
- Participate in scheduled activities as required, including Learning & Community Engagement small ensemble activities
- Represent your section and the Ulster Orchestra in a manner befitting its values and vision, maintaining the highest standards of professional etiquette during all rehearsals, performances and recordings
- Attend sectional rehearsals as required, seeking out and accepting feedback on your performance, technique and artistic growth
- Carry out ambassadorial duties such as attending fundraising or donor events as required
- Comply with and uphold the Ulster Orchestra's Health and Safety policies and guidance
- At all times and in everything we do, to be aligned with the culture and values of the Ulster Orchestra

---

## PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

---

### ESSENTIAL

- Training to a level expected of a professional musician
- Knowledge and experience of performing a wide range of orchestral repertoire
- Ability to demonstrate excellence in orchestral playing ability
- Strong communication skills
- Good interpersonal skills and ability to work effectively, flexibly and collaboratively
- Willingness to participate in additional activities such as Learning & Community Engagement

### DESIRABLE

- Proven expertise in a wide range of musical activity, including education and chamber work
- Recent professional orchestral experience

---

## OTHER

---

If appointed, you will be required to apply for an Enhanced Check through [AccessNI](https://www.accessni.gov.uk/), in order to participate in work activities with children and/or adults at risk. If you foresee any potential issues with this, please email: [careers@ulsterorchestra.com](mailto:careers@ulsterorchestra.com).

*NB. By virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (exceptions) Order (NI) 1979 and because of the nature of the work for which you are applying this post is exempt from the provisions of Article 5*

*of the Rehabilitations of Offenders (NI) Order 1978. Accordingly, you are not entitled to withhold information about convictions, which would otherwise be considered as 'spent' under the provisions of the 1978 Order. Failure to disclose such information could result in dismissal or disciplinary action in the event of employment.*

---

## SUBMISSION GUIDANCE AND HOW TO APPLY

---

The Ulster Orchestra strives to be fully representative of all demographical aspects of society and to offer a truly inclusive working environment. We are committed to equality of opportunity and welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Within this context we particularly encourage applications from people with disabilities, LGBTQI+, Black, Asian and other global majority backgrounds, and those from backgrounds of social and economic deprivation.

All our Orchestra jobs are managed through Musical Chairs. We have outlined our recruitment process for your information below. Please note, applications should not be sent directly to the Ulster Orchestra.

### **Before applying - check if you have the right to live and work in the UK**

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that all our employees have the legal right to live and work in the UK. Any offer of employment we make to you is on the condition that you have, or can gain, permission to work in the UK. By law, you will not be able to start working for us until you are able to provide evidence that this permission has been granted. It's important to note that the UK is no longer part of the EU, therefore, the right to work in the EU does not cover the UK.

***NB. this role is not eligible for a Skilled Worker Visa therefore we can only accept applications from candidates who are able to evidence their right to work in the UK.***

### Stage 1: Application on Musical Chairs

Complete the online application form on Musical Chairs by **Sunday 14th September 2025**. **No applications will be accepted after the stated closing date.**

To finalise your application, you will be required to complete our online Diversity Monitoring Form, which is available via a link on Musical Chairs. This provides us with important information to support our Diversity & Inclusion strategy.

### Stage 2: Round One Audition - Digital Submission

You will receive the full audition repertoire on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025**. Round one will be a 3–5-minute digital recording, comprising of Mozart 1st mvt exposition of Concerto 4 or 5 (no cadenza) plus excerpts, which you will be required to upload to Musical Chairs by **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025**.

**NB. All round one auditions will be listened to by the panel.**

## Digital Submission Guidelines

- Your video recording should be recorded using a mobile device
- Your video recording must be performed 'as live' in one continuous take and must be unedited
- Repertoire must be performed in the specified order, without accompaniment and using your usual instrument
- You must not speak during the recording
- Your video recording should be landscape and you and your instrument should be face on and central to the camera
- Where possible recordings should be made approximately 2-3m from the recording device

**NB. Your video recording is a private submission and will only be listened to by the panel. The panel will only hear the audio of your submission, and all submissions are anonymous throughout the audition process.**

## Stage 3: Round Two Audition

If your round one audition is successful, you will progress to round two. The audition repertoire at this stage will comprise of Mozart 1st mvt exposition of Concerto 4 or 5 (no cadenza) and 1st mvt exposition of major Romantic/20th century concerto, plus excerpts.

You will be invited to attend a **live audition in Belfast on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025**. A further date may be added depending on numbers – to be confirmed.

If you are unable to attend a live audition you may request the option of submitting a digital recording of the repertoire to Musical Chairs.

## Stage 4: Trial

Candidates who are successful at round two will be invited to complete a short trial of up to 2 weeks.

The trial may include the following key aspects subject to the schedule:

- rehearsals and performance at a core season concert;
- opportunity to play chamber music and/or perform excerpts with orchestra;
- participation in a learning and community engagement project;
- participation in a digital project.

The trial will aim to include all aspects of the role including core season concerts, pops concerts, regional concerts, learning and community engagement, digital projects and chamber music depending on schedules. An informal meeting with members of the management team may also be scheduled during your trial. This will provide you with an opportunity to ask the questions which are important to you, to hear about the values and expectations of the Orchestra and to learn about how we will support you in your future career through our greatest asset of all – the rich diversity of our work and repertoire.

As we know this can sometimes be a daunting experience, you may request a point of contact within the orchestra during your trial for support, reassurance and to give you an insight into the real-life experience of working in the Ulster Orchestra and living in Northern Ireland. The point of contact will not be a member of the panel and is therefore independent of the process.

After the initial short trial, you may be invited for further trial(s), at which stage you may be given panel feedback to assist you.

## Stage 5: Permanent Contract

If you are successful at trial, you will be offered a permanent position with the Orchestra with a **probation period of up to 12 months**. The Orchestra Manager will meet with you after 5 and 9 months to provide feedback on your progress and to provide you with an opportunity to discuss how you are finding the first year.

Please note, to be able to fulfil all aspects of the position, including Learning & Community engagement activities, you must ensure you live within reasonable commuting distance of Belfast.



---

## OUR HISTORY

---

Music Director Laureate **Daniele Rustioni**  
 Honorary Principal Guest Conductor **Jac van Steen**  
 Conductor Laureate **Rafael Payare**  
 Artist Laureate **Sir James Galway**

Leader **Ioana Petcu-Colan**

Founded in 1966, the Ulster Orchestra has been at the forefront of musical life in Northern Ireland and the Orchestra's full-time musicians form the region's only professional symphony orchestra.

In 2019, the Ulster Orchestra appointed Daniele Rustioni as its Chief Conductor, a role which commenced at the start of the Orchestra's 2019/20 Season, and in 2022/23, in recognition of the strength of the relationship, he was appointed the Orchestra's Music Director. Rustioni's tenure ended with the 2023/24 season, and he joins a distinguished line of past principal conductors including Bryden Thomson, Vernon Handley, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Thierry Fischer, Kenneth Montgomery, JoAnn Faletta and, most recently, Rafael Payare.

With a mission to enrich the lives of people living in Northern Ireland, those visiting, and those who encounter it through international touring and regular radio and TV broadcasts with both BBC Northern Ireland and BBC Radio 3, the Orchestra strives for excellence in all it undertakes, be it regular concert performances, learning and community engagement programmes, or creative collaborations across the arts.

The Ulster Orchestra gives around 40 evening and lunchtime concerts each season in its home, the Ulster Hall, and in Belfast Waterfront. The Orchestra performs for the BBC Radio 3 invitational concert series at the Ulster Hall and in front of tens of thousands for the BBC's Proms in the Park celebrations each year. The Orchestra appears regularly at the main BBC Proms series in the Royal Albert Hall, and its 2022 appearance with Daniele Rustioni and Louise Alder received widespread excellent reviews, including a 5 star review in The Guardian:

*"The qualities that characterise [Rustioni's] work in the theatre – flair, intelligence, an immaculate sense of pace, tension and drama – also very much formed the basis of an exceptional concert that found him and his orchestra on terrific form."*  
 (Tim Ashley, The Guardian)

An important aspect of the Ulster Orchestra's work across Northern Ireland is its annual touring programme of concerts, which brings live orchestral music to the heart of communities across the region. *Ulster Orchestra On Your Doorstep*, was founded in the 2016/17 Season (the Orchestra's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season) and it sees the orchestra play in as diverse a range of venues as possible across Northern Ireland, sending everything from small ensembles and chamber music concerts, right up to the full symphony orchestra, far and wide across the region. In addition to our local tours, we also travelled to Linz, Austria in 2022 and 2024 for performances at the renowned Brucknerhaus Concert Hall and also performed at Festival Berlioz in France in August 2023.

The Orchestra performs with a number of regular partners, including Northern Ireland Opera, Belfast International Arts Festival and Belfast Philharmonic Choir. A new partnership for the

Ulster Orchestra was established in 2016 with the club night Lush!, and the ensuing arena event Lush! Classical has been a sell-out event for four consecutive years.

The Ulster Orchestra records regularly for labels such as Hyperion (with Howard Shelley), Naxos (with former Chief Conductor JoAnn Falletta), Chandos, SOMM and Toccata Classics. The Orchestra's most recent recording of Weill's Violin Concerto and Second Symphony on SOMM records continues to garner international critical acclaim since its release early in 2022. Through partnering with organisations such as NI Screen, the Orchestra has undertaken various recording activities for film and TV, including the internationally-renowned children's series 'Puffin Rock'.

The Ulster Orchestra's Learning and Community Engagement programme aims to connect the Orchestra with communities and individuals across Northern Ireland and to provide accessible and innovative opportunities for people to engage as audiences and participants. Since 2016, all the Orchestra's musicians have been working on education and outreach activity, including Relaxed Performances for people with additional needs, residencies in schools and universities, concerts directly in people's communities, mentoring and coaching for players at all stages of their musical journey and the Crescendo project, the Orchestra's community-led residency project for children from disadvantaged areas in North and West Belfast. We have a long list of organisations that we work with, including Age NI, Autism NI, the Now Group, the Alzheimer's Society, the Belfast Trust Arts in Health programme, Community Arts Partnership, the Flax Trust, and Women's Aid.

Salon Sessions is an exciting new online project which takes small ensembles from the orchestra to unique and wonderful spaces. It also fulfils our passion to collaborate with and support local artists, offering them a platform to showcase their talents and what Belfast has to offer across the world. Each artist has their songs or poems arranged and performed by a variety of small ensembles of Ulster Orchestra musicians, recorded and filmed in inspiring, quirky, innovative locations culminating in a twenty minute professionally produced online 'session'. These are free to view by the public via the Orchestra's YouTube channel. To date, we have successfully collaborated with several artists including Ryan McMullan, Colum Sands, Niamh Dunne, Jordan Adetunji and our wonderful 'Your Song Now' project resulted in a successful album, *Our Songs, Our Place*, featuring original songs by nine local artists.

Thanks to everyone in the Ulster Orchestra family, we hold a unique place in the hearts of Northern Ireland's people and we share a commitment to maintain and grow that success in the future.





---

## OUR VISION & VALUES

---

Our vision is 'to be a vital force in the cultural, social and educational life of Northern Ireland'. It is an ambition that requires constant evolution to meet its challenges. Society doesn't stand still, and nor do we.

Along with our vision, we hold our values dear – they are unique and authentic to us as they were co-created through a collaborative process of lively debate and discussion – just how we like to do things here!

### We CARE about our colleagues

- We treat each other with dignity and respect
- We encourage, support and value each other
- We are one team and share a collective responsibility
- We build trust through constructive communication
- We are innovative, resilient and resourceful

### We COMMIT to being world class

- We are dedicated to the highest level of quality and performance
- We are proud of our collective talents
- We are aspirational, ambitious, creative and progressive
- We are advocates and ambassadors for music and the arts
- We are honoured to be the orchestra of Northern Ireland on the world stage

### We ENGAGE with our community

- We reach out to, work with and connect people
- We provide inspirational musical experiences that are accessible to all
- We are proud to be instilled in, relevant to and valued by the community
- We present learning and life enrichment opportunities for people of all ages
- We value this country's rich artistic heritage and the part we continue to play in its future

These values underpin everything we do, and you will see them running through all of our company policies and procedures. Life at Ulster Orchestra is varied, meaningful and enriching - our employees live the values because they are as important to them as they are to our company.

Central to our values, is our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. We strive to provide a space where every person is treated with dignity and respect and feels welcomed, accepted and supported, where they can excel at what they do and can fulfil their potential, whatever their background. Through our membership of Black Lives in Music as well as collaborations and partnerships with inclusive music ensembles, such as Acoustronic and Performance without Barriers we are committed to playing our part in working towards a music industry which is truly inclusive.

---

## OUR BENEFITS

---

Working in the arts and creative industries is a wonderful experience, and the UO is in the enviable position of being able to offer the security of a permanent employment to over 80 creatives.

While a salaried role is a benefit in itself, we are pleased to be able to offer more in terms of benefits. We have highlighted just a few of them below.

### Family Friendly Policies

We aim to provide a high degree of **flexibility** to ensure that every employee feels supported and encouraged to have a healthy balance between work and home commitments.

School run, or early morning parkrun? No problem! With rehearsals typically starting at 10am, there's no need for breakfast clubs, and you can even get your daily exercise out of the way before work.

Our policies for **Maternity, Paternity, Adoption Leave & Shared Parental Leave** are generous and supportive, aimed at helping employees to balance their work and home life commitments, encouraging the retention of talent and experience, increasing well-being and thus reducing absence and stress.

We offer a **Career Break** policy after 3 years of service, to assist with work-life balance, e.g. To take time off for caring responsibilities, to go back to college, to go travelling and/or to accompany a partner on an overseas assignment.

### Health & Wellbeing

We have a comprehensive **Wellbeing Policy** through which we aim to help our employees to stay fit and healthy and support them when they are ill.

Our **Health Cash Plan** is immediately available to all new joiners and provides cash back to cover costs such as dental and optical bills, physiotherapy and consultancy charges. It also provides access to a 24-7 helpline, virtual GPs and an online discount platform.

We have regular scheduled visits from a registered **Physiotherapist**, and all employees have the opportunity to book an appointment if needed. We also run free functional movement classes open to all employees.

All employees have regular access to a **BAPAM registered GP**, who is available to provide and referrals for any medical concerns.

We also know how important your ears are. When a player joins, they will have an appointment with **our contracted audiologist** to provide you with moulded hearing protectors, and we will arrange for you to have regular audiometric hearing tests.

We offer a **Cycle to Work** scheme to all employees, enabling you to save at least 25% of the cost of a new bike and spreading the cost over a 12-month period. Not only good for the environment, but also helps you to stay fit and healthy by getting on your bike.

## Holidays

How does 5 weeks off in the summer sound to you? In addition, you will have a further 2 weeks off at other times in the year, so plenty of opportunity to enjoy those other important things in your life.

## Induction

Upon joining the UO, all employees have a structured and comprehensive induction, to ensure all new joiners receive a consistent and positive experience and feel welcome, included and supported, from the point of job offer to the end of their probationary period.

## Learning and Development

We believe in the importance of continuous learning and development and invest to support the growth and progression of our employees. This might be in the form of individual, confidential one to one coaching or group training sessions covering topics such as Resilience, Communications, Leadership etc. We also encourage personal and professional development through internal secondments and acting up opportunities as well as support towards relevant further academic and skills development programmes.

## Loyalty Awards

We are delighted to have low turnover of our people, with the average length of service being 12 years. We thank our employees for their loyalty, by providing loyalty awards at various long service milestones.

## Pensions

All employees are automatically enrolled into our company pension scheme and will benefit from our generous employer contributions (currently 6% p.a.). As we comply with government legislation regarding pensions, employees also currently contribute 2% p.a. All employees have access to the Orchestra's pension advisor for advice on their pension requirements.

## Financial Support

Ulster Orchestra Society Ltd offers an interest-free loan scheme to support Orchestra players with the costs associated with purchasing and maintaining their instruments. All permanent orchestra players will be eligible to make an application for a loan, upon satisfactory completion of their probationary period. You may apply for a loan to cover all or part of the associated costs. The amount loaned will be capped at £10,000 per employee, within each financial year subject to availability of funds.



---

## LIVING HERE

---

Anyone who lives here already will know that Northern Ireland offers a high quality of life. Small enough to get around easily (you can cross Northern Ireland by car in about 2 hours) but big enough to offer a great way of life and an amazing variety of experiences and activities. For those of you thinking about relocating, there are lots of brilliant reasons to consider living here.

People here are renowned as friendly and welcoming. Recent research conducted by Lloyds Banking Group for its annual Happiness Index in June 2020 placed Northern Ireland as the happiest place to live in the UK, with contentment levels here having increased by 6% on the previous year.

Northern Ireland has three airports (two of which are in the Greater Belfast area) with regular direct flights to the UK and Europe, and it is 2 hours by road or rail from Belfast to Dublin. Public transport is efficient and there is little congestion.

Northern Ireland offers a top-notch environment for living. In line with the rest of the UK, there is reasonable personal taxation, an excellent education system, a world-class healthcare system which is free and accessible to all and affordable properties.

More than 1100 international companies currently operate in Northern Ireland, including major US companies like Microsoft, AllState and Seagate, with IT a major industry sector. These companies have done their own research on living and working here, and it paints a clear picture of the benefits. Belfast is one of the most cost-effective cities in Western Europe to live in and TechNation research reports that Belfast is the best place to come to work as a software developer. The city ranked 2nd in the UK (behind London) and 9th overall in the Top 25 Tech Cities of the Future 2020/21, according to Global Outlook Tech Cities of the Future.

Property prices in Northern Ireland remain well below those in other UK locations and in the Republic of Ireland - around 75% lower than they are in London and 60% lower than Dublin. The majority of people living in Belfast and the surrounding area prefer to buy property rather than rent, and prices mean this is well within reach. Northern Ireland has reported the second-lowest crime rate in the UK for 2020 out of 43 nationwide police forces. As the top region with the lowest overall crime rate is the City of London (classified as a commercial area), this means Northern Ireland has the lowest residential crime rate in the UK.

For anyone thinking of relocating with a family, you'll be pleased to know that Northern Ireland is the top region in the UK for educational attainment, consistently coming out top at GCSE and A-Level exam level (the latter is equivalent to the US High School Diploma, the Republic of Ireland's Leaving Certificate and Scotland's Higher exams) and in 2019, 84.8% of Northern Ireland students achieved the three top grades at A-Level, compared to 75.8% in the rest of the UK.

Northern Ireland is developing as a progressive society, becoming ever-more multi-cultural and diverse. There are many organisations and networks whose remit is to support people from particular cultural backgrounds and minority groups – we can direct you to the relevant people if this would help you to settle into life here.

If you're wondering about your leisure time, there is plenty to fill in your out-of-work hours. Northern Ireland's scenery is spectacular and between mountains and dramatic coastlines, you're spoilt for choice when it comes to locations for outdoor activities from hiking to water-sports such as paddle-boarding and fishing - or even just a spectacular drive along the Antrim Coast. The food and restaurant scene is of international quality and - besides Ulster Orchestra concerts - there are so many arts and cultural events and festivals, from pub backroom traditional sessions to international touring stars, you're bound to find something to appeal to your tastes.

For more information about the life and work of the Ulster Orchestra, visit <http://www.ulsterorchestra.org.uk>

