

Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI): Christchurch Symphony Orchestra Music Director

Location: Christchurch (Aotearoa New Zealand)

Application Deadline: October 24 2025

Organisation: Christchurch Symphony Orchestra

Job Type: Contract

Commencement: 2028

Term: 3 years, with potential for successive term(s)

Reports to: CSO Chief Executive Officer

About the Role

Christchurch Symphony Orchestra is seeking expressions of interest (EOIs) for the prestigious role of Music Director (MD). The MD will play a key leadership role in our music programming, artistic direction, and the overall performance experience of our orchestra. The successful candidate will bring exceptional skills in conducting, a deep understanding of orchestral music, and a passion for inspiring both musicians and audiences alike. This is an exciting opportunity for a visionary conductor with a track record of excellence in musical leadership to lift the organisation to even greater heights, as a flagship of New Zealand music and culture. The ability to shape and celebrate a unique and dynamic musical journey will be rewarded.

About the Orchestra

Christchurch Symphony Orchestra is a leading cultural asset, situated in the largest city of Aotearoa New Zealand's South Island. We are a unique organisation with a broad range of offerings including traditional symphonic performance, opera and ballet, collaboration with contemporary artists and a comprehensive offering of participatory community engagement. We comprise an employee musician cohort of 35, supplementing for mainstage programmes from a large pool of auditioned professional contractor musicians. As the resident orchestra at the iconic Christchurch Town Hall, CSO is committed to presenting exceptional and innovative performances while fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for our musicians, audience and community of Ōtautahi Christchurch, Waitaha Canterbury and beyond. CSO is passionate about building meaningful connections through the power of symphonic music and continue to set the highest artistic standards within the cultural community.

Key Responsibilities of the MD

- Lead and conduct CSO in rehearsals and performances.
- Play a leading role in the artistic vision of the orchestra.
- Collaborate with the artistic team to curate and develop the seasons' programming, within established budgets.
- Work closely with musicians, promoting a culture of excellence and creativity.
- Engage with audiences to develop and enhance relationships, fostering a deeper appreciation for orchestral music.
- Represent the organisation at public events, festivals, and with media outlets as needed and practical.
- Contribute to the development of educational and community engagement programs.

- Contribute to relationships with other musical institutions, composers, and soloists.
- Contribute to relationships with existing and prospective donors and senior representatives of both public and corporate funders.
- Take part in player auditions and performance reviews as available.

Key Requirements

- Proven experience as a conductor, with significant professional experience leading orchestras.
- A strong and varied repertoire across different musical styles and periods.
- Excellent communication and leadership skills.
- Strong understanding of orchestra dynamics and the ability to inspire and engage musicians.
- A passion for innovation and a commitment to building relationships with diverse communities.
- Relevant qualifications in music or equivalent professional experience.
- Previous experience in a similar senior artistic leadership role will be considered an asset.
- Ability and flexibility to undertake engagement as a contractor in New Zealand, for up to 9 (3-6 day) periods per year.

How to Apply

Interested candidates are invited to submit an Expression of Interest, including the following materials:

- A 2–3 page cover letter outlining your suitability for the role and your vision for the orchestra.
- An up-to-date CV detailing relevant conducting experience and achievements.
- A video recording (or recordings) of recent conducting performance(s) including 3 contrasting pieces) – 15 minutes maximum duration (3 x 5 minutes).
- Any additional documents or references that demonstrate your artistic leadership.
- Contact details for three professional references. Referees will not be contacted without the applicant receiving prior notice.

Please submit your EOI to graham.sattler@csso.co.nz by October 24, 2025

Christchurch Symphony Orchestra is an equal opportunity employer, committed to diversity and inclusion in all areas of employment.