



**SINFONIA
SMITH SQ.**

APPLICATION PACK

2025/26

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

Every year, we invite 34 players from all over the world to be part of Sinfonia Smith Square's renowned ten-month Fellowship programme, designed to prepare you for all aspects of professional musical life. We are looking for musicians who not only have talent but dedication, team spirit, imagination and willingness to take risks and embrace new ideas.

To be eligible, you should play one of the following orchestral instruments 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:

Violin	Flute	Horn
Viola	Oboe	Trumpet
Cello	Clarinet	Percussion
Double Bass	Bassoon	

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 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 you are welcome to 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 do contact us.



“Being able to call yourself a Sinfonia Smith Square player exemplifies belonging, talent, credibility and the future. The Fellowship is a once in a lifetime opportunity to discover and push your boundaries. I wouldn't be the same without this programme.”

EUGENE LEE 2009
ASSISTANT LEADER, PHILHARMONIA; ASSOCIATE ARTIST, SINFONIA SMITH SQUARE

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.

Percussionists should submit footage of you playing timpani: for this, we will accept an ensemble or orchestral performance so long as you are clearly visible and audible. Alternatively, we recommend you film yourself playing a short portion of the timpani part from an orchestral piece.

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.

RE-APPLYING

If you have applied in previous years, you are warmly welcome to apply again – many of our players achieve places after applying more than once – but please ensure you tell us in your form what new things you have done musically and how you have progressed since your last application.

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.

NOTIFICATION

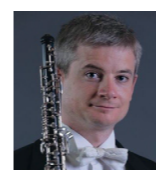
Once we have received your complete application, you should receive a confirmation by email within a few hours. You will then hear within a month of the closing date if we are able to invite you for an audition in March.

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.



"Hard work and perseverance pay off! I didn't get a place in Sinfonia Smith Square first time, but when I reapplied it was absolutely worth the effort: Amazing orchestral projects from Baroque music to contemporary and jazz, collaborations with leading orchestras, tours, audition masterclasses, and performing in great concert halls in London and beyond."

PEDRO LOPEZ CAMPOS 2015
FREELANCE FLAUTIST



"I am deeply grateful to have been part of Sinfonia Smith Square. Not only did it bring about opportunities to play at wonderful venues and interact with leading professional players, it gave an insight into the very real life of becoming an orchestral musician."

MICHAEL WILSON 2004
PRINCIPAL OBOE, HONG KONG PHILHARMONIC



"During my time as a Fellow, I learned invaluable orchestral skills that I don't think I would've been able to pick up elsewhere. I was able to make mistakes and improve upon them in a setting that fostered growth and helped me to improve my musicianship. When my time with the Sinfonia finished, I felt newly courageous, and went straight into my first orchestral trial. Since then, I have continued to freelance in London and throughout the UK. I love my varied orchestral career, which I am able truly to enjoy through the confidence that I learned as a member of Sinfonia Smith Square."

CORINNA BOYLAN 2018
FREELANCE CELLIST

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. On the day, you will have the chance to run through key passages of your repertoire very briefly with one of our accompanists before the audition, or you may bring your own accompanist.

You will also be sent a set of short orchestral extracts in advance which we recommend you familiarise yourself with fully prior to the audition. In addition, there will be a short piece of sight reading on the day.

INSTRUMENT	PIECES
Violin	1 st movement of a Mozart Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece
Viola	1 st movement of the Hoffmeister or Stamitz Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece
Cello	1 st movement of a Haydn Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece
Bass	1 st movement of a Classical Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece
Flute	1 st movement of a Mozart Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece
Oboe	1 st movement of the Mozart Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece
Clarinet	1 st movement of a Mozart Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece
Bassoon	1 st movement of a Mozart Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece
Horn	1 st movement of a Mozart Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece

Trumpet	1 st movement of the Haydn or Hummel Concerto A contrasting accompanied piece
Percussion	A piece of your choice for solo marimba

You should know the whole 1st movement of your concerto and contrasting piece as the panel may ask you to play several passages. Please note you do not have to prepare the cadenza of your concerto movement unless you personally want to. We welcome and encourage you to consider a contrasting piece from a diverse range of composers.

Candidates will be notified of the outcome of auditions by the end of March, and select individuals will then be asked back to participate in a short interview (see next page).



“As a member of Sinfonia Smith Square, you live the life of a working orchestral musician for a year. I found this invaluable, as when the call comes in to play with a professional orchestra, you don’t feel thrown in at the deep end. You are already doing the job, and you know exactly what to expect.”

JAMES BURKE 2010
CO-PRINCIPAL CLARINET, BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
PRINCIPAL, ACADEMY OF ST MARTIN IN THE FIELDS



“I have so many incredibly fond memories of my time in Sinfonia Smith Square, almost too many to recall. I loved almost every minute of it! The absolute highlight for me though would have to be the trip to Anghiari. Playing chamber music, with good friends in one of the most picturesque places I had ever seen was something I will never ever forget.”

ABBEY EDLIN 2010
HORN, MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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

Although we can only grant 34 places in the orchestra each year, we are keen to help others who have applied. As noted above, many of our players achieve places after applying more than once, so we want to give you the best possible chance to succeed in future years. 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.