



Choir Director - Cardiff

Hours: 6ish per week, including rehearsal and preparation time + extra for gigs/workshops
Contract: Freelance
Fee: £150 per rehearsal, plus sessional fees for gigs and workshops

Background

The Choir with No Name (CWNN) runs quirky pop music choirs for people affected by homelessness in London, Birmingham, Brighton and Liverpool. Our mission is to empower as many homeless and marginalised people as possible to showcase their talents, build personal resilience and positive, joyful singing communities. In 2021 we're very excited to work in partnership with The Wallich to launch a new choir in Cardiff, and are now seeking our choir director.

You don't necessarily need to be a hugely experienced choral conductor (although it wouldn't hurt!), but will need experience of leading and facilitating community music. You'll also need an excellent ear, keen musicianship, great taste in music, the ability to work with and lead other professional musicians, and of course the ability to engage and inspire and have fun with 30 or so people who may not be used to the discipline of a choir setting. You'll work alongside the Cardiff choir co-ordinator (whose role will be to recruit and support choir members, plus provide logistics for gigs, workshops and rehearsals). You'll receive support and supervision from our central team and other choir directors.

The job itself

1. Rehearsals

- a) Plan each season's repertoire and set rehearsal schedules, in consultation with choir members and Artistic Director, following our diversity and inclusion principles
- b) Providing the direction and attention to detail necessary to support choir members in achieving the best sound possible, paying attention to tone, pitch, rhythm, tempo, and harmony
- c) Lead weekly warm ups with attention to healthy vocal technique, fun and variety
- d) Give leadership and direction to accompanists and musical volunteers
- e) Arrange repertoire, taking an inclusive and accessible approach
- f) Allocate and coach soloists, again paying attention to inclusion and diversity
- g) Encourage and support choir members in their endeavours outside of choir, musical and otherwise

2. Performances

- a) With choir coordinator, consult on appropriate performance opportunities
- b) Manage the musical side of gigs; book the band, ensure they will be rehearsed to a professional standard, ensure equipment is adequate etc.
- c) At gigs, be the front person for the group, chatting to the audience about what we do and leading them in any participative sections
- d) Lead the choir in establishing a suitable formation for the space
- e) Conduct choir and give direction to musicians



3. Outreach Projects

- a) Lead outreach projects in the local community across target services (homeless services, mental health projects etc.), working with the choir coordinator and some choir member ambassadors
- b) Lead workshops with local corporate partners

4. Other

- a) Any administrative tasks associated with the role
- b) Meet regularly with choir coordinator, Artistic Director and other CWNN choir directors for planning and training purposes

Person Specification

Essential

- Passion for the organisation and its members' potential, and commitment to its vision, mission and values
- Excellent musical skills, including arranging for a four-part choir, with facilities to share arrangements with other directors
- Ability to lead a choir of differing abilities in a way in which its members feel both comfortable and challenged
- Ability to inspire and make people feel good about themselves
- Ability to improvise and think on the spot
- Ability to lead and direct other musicians, including accompanists and dep choir directors, and a network of them to call on
- Experience of leading choirs, or community music group workshops

Desirable

- Experience of working with vulnerable adults
- Accompanying skills (e.g. piano, guitar)
- Reading and writing music using music notation software

How to apply

In the interest of a non-biased process in appointing our choir director, we're not asking for specific details of your education, training, or work history. Instead, we are seeking the answers to questions that demonstrate the above skills necessary for the role. To help us with this, please follow these steps:

- Copy and paste the questions below onto a separate Word document.
- Answer the questions, trying not to use more than 300 words per question.
- Don't put your name or any identifying information on the document.
- Email the document as an attachment to info@choirwithnoname.org, by 9am on Monday 20th September. Please include your telephone number in the email.

If you have access needs that make any aspect of the application process difficult, please contact us at info@choirwithnoname.org and we will make reasonable adjustments. You can also use this email address if you have any questions about the process.

If your answers are among the ones that show the best demonstrations of the skills we're looking for, we will be in touch to ask along to audition for us. If you haven't heard from us by **27th September**, we're afraid that you can assume that you haven't been successful.

Thank you so much for your interest in coming to join us at the Choir with No Name, and good luck!



APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Try not to use more than 300 words per question - thank you. Don't feel you need to use the full word limit if you can answer more succinctly.

1. Why is the Choir with No Name where you want to be, and why now? If relevant, feel free to tell us how your experience makes you the perfect person to lead our Cardiff choir.
2. We want to build communities who work together to lead their own choir projects, harnessing members' strengths and creating opportunities to develop new skills. Can you tell us how you would go about that in our Cardiff choir? (If relevant, tell us about any past experience which you would draw upon).
3. Tell us about two contrasting songs you would want to arrange for the Cardiff choir, describing your approach to the arrangement. You don't have to write the full arrangement down but if you have a previous written example of an arrangement you've written that you think would suit our Cardiff choir, then feel free to include it.
4. Imagine you are bringing one of these excellent arrangements to rehearsal and trying it out for the first time. One of the choir members tells you they hate that song and it reminds them of a very difficult time in their life. In addition, one of the parts you have written just isn't working and the altos can't pitch their harmony. What would you say and do?
5. Sell us your vision for the Cardiff choir's first performance. Think big, but achievable 😊 Where would it be? What would you sing? What musicians would be backing the choir up and how would you have recruited them? Who would be in the audience? What other artists might you want to include on the bill? Feel free to answer these questions or to diversify into others according to your vision.