



"one of Britain's very best choirs" (The New York Times)

Choir | Consort | Orchestra | Education
Jeffrey Skidmore OBE Artistic Director & Conductor

Independent Trustee vacancies

Ex Cathedra, a leading UK choir and Early Music ensemble, is recruiting two new trustees for the charity to help oversee its activities in providing internationally acclaimed live performances, recordings, and extensive education and participation programme.

As well as a strong interest in choral music and knowledge of the diverse communities represented in the West Midlands, to complement the existing strengths of board members, we shall be particularly interested in applicants with background or experience in either legal affairs, primary and secondary education or health.

The position is unremunerated and, because of our engagement with children, young people and vulnerable adults, we ask trustees to undergo a DBS check. Board meetings are held quarterly in Birmingham.

To express interest, please send your CV together with a short covering letter to:

Graham Mackenzie OBE, Chair
Ex Cathedra
CBSO Centre
Berkley Street
Birmingham B1 2LF

or to info@excathedra.co.uk, marked FAO Graham Mackenzie

The deadline for expressions of interest is Monday 12 March 2018. We would then like to arrange a preliminary meeting with you.

If you have any queries relating to the role or the recruitment process, please contact the Chair, Graham Mackenzie, on 07901 550577.

Ex Cathedra is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity.

About Ex Cathedra

Ex Cathedra is a leading UK choir and Early Music ensemble with a repertoire that reaches from the 12th to the 21st centuries. We are known for our passion for seeking out the best, the unfamiliar and the unexpected in the choral repertoire and for giving outstanding performances.

Founded in 1969 by Jeffrey Skidmore OBE, the group comprises chamber choir, vocal Consort, period-instrument orchestra and an extensive education and participation programme. We explore, research and commission the finest choral music, and aim to set the highest standards for excellence in performance and training.

We present a series of concerts both in Birmingham, where we are an Associate Artist at Town Hall, in London, and at venues across the Midlands. We tour extensively and enjoy invitations to appear at festivals and concert series throughout the UK and abroad.

We have made over 20 critically-acclaimed recordings. Our *Britten to America* CD was shortlisted for a Grammy Award 2015 and our *A French Baroque Diva: Arias for Marie Fel* CD won a Gramophone Award 2015.

An extensive programme of schools and community projects is delivered by our team of expert Vocal Tutors who are all members of Ex Cathedra. *Singing Playgrounds* has reached over 700 primary schools across the UK and also in Belgium, China, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand and Uganda, winning the 'Best Musical Initiative' Award at the Music Teacher Magazine Awards 2014. *Singing Medicine* for chronically-ill children takes place weekly at Birmingham Children's Hospital and Birmingham Heartlands Hospital, and *Singing Pathways* works weekly with adult stroke patients at Solihull Hospital.

Nurturing young singers is also at the heart of our work, and our Academy of Vocal Music comprises four regularly rehearsing youth choirs, whilst 2017-18 sees the start of our choral Scholarships programme for graduate professional singers, and the parallel Student Scholarships programme with the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

Ex Cathedra generates income from a wide range of sources. We are an Arts Council England 'National Portfolio Organisation', with funding secure until 2022 and we receive income from Birmingham City Council. Taken together these grants represent around 10% of turnover. We earn income at the box office and from selling concerts, CDs and education projects, and we raise substantial funding from trusts, foundations and from individual donations.

Board Membership Criteria and Responsibilities

The creation of Jeffrey Skidmore in 1969, Ex Cathedra is a choral powerhouse based in Birmingham's CBSO Centre with an eclectic and wide-ranging repertoire and a strong sense of community. Over the past 48 years, Jeffrey Skidmore has grown Ex Cathedra - which began with just four singing members - into a flexible group of singers and instrumentalists who share a commitment to the choral traditions of Tallis and Byrd, Purcell, Handel and Bach. Ex Cathedra's exhaustive search for new repertoire has led them to frequent new commissions and to the lesser well-known byways of French and Latin-American Baroque. Not content with fostering new repertoire, Jeffrey Skidmore's background as musician and pedagogue is evident in Ex Cathedra's network of local youth choirs, singing initiatives in hospital wards and school playgrounds, and an array of historical, research-based projects that are the trademarks of its portfolio.

Ex Cathedra is a Registered Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee. The Board of Trustees was set up in February 1989 to further develop the ensemble's artistic vision. The Board has ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity and ensuring that it is solvent, well run and delivering the charitable outcomes for the public for which has been set up. Day to day management of the charity is in the hands of an executive team led by the General Manager who works closely with the Jeffrey Skidmore, who leads on all artistic matters.

As a Director of a Limited Company and a Trustee of a Registered Charity, directors are expected to oversee the company's affairs in accordance with its articles of association, relevant company law and in line with the Charity Commission's principles of good governance, including managing charity resources and risk. Specific statutory and good practice responsibilities are set out in Annex A.

However, an important aspect of the role of the Board is that of supporting Jeffrey Skidmore in his role as Artistic Director in developing the artistic and educational activities of the charity. It is considered essential that his artistic approach is actively supported by the directors whilst discharging their statutory and charity responsibilities.

Board membership is voluntary and unpaid although expenses can be reimbursed. Directors are expected to:-

- Attend as many concerts as they can, both in Birmingham or elsewhere in the UK. Complimentary tickets are available for Birmingham concerts but directors are encouraged to purchase tickets where possible and to bring their own guests with a view to widening the supporter base.
- Support the Artistic Director and executive team in entertaining Ex Cathedra's guests at concerts where this is arranged.
- Become a member of the 'Angel' programme if they are able.
- Support, if possible, any other fund raising initiatives for the charity.
- When possible to attend any external/fundraising activities organised by Ex Cathedra
- When possible accept invitations from the education team to observe or participate in education and Singing Medicine workshops and activities.
- When appropriate, on an ad hoc basis, participate in Board sub groups or other working groups set up to address specific issues, or give advice to members of the executive team.

Specific Responsibilities of Directors

Whilst membership of the Ex Cathedra board is voluntary and unpaid, directors are expected to accept specific responsibilities in line with statutory requirements and good practice.

Attendance at meetings

- Directors are expected to make every effort to attend Board meetings, which take place four times a year in Birmingham, on a regular basis.

Effective functioning of the Board: directors

- Approve all board appointments including the appointment of the chair
- Monitor board appointment procedures to ensure they are open and effective
- Ensure that the board includes members with an appropriate balance of skills and experience and has an appropriate gender and diversity balance.
- Ensure that there is a regular periodic review of the performance and effectiveness of trustees
- Raise and agree items for discussion at meetings, including policies to be reviewed

Strategic Planning: directors

- Approve, adopt and review business plans
- Approve the annual programme of activity
- Review the scope and compliance with any funding agreements and/or service level agreements with major funders, including applications for such funding

Policy: directors

- Determine policies subject to board approval and establish review programmes
- Ensure compliance with prevailing legislation
- Conduct an annual risk assessment and agree required actions to mitigate identified risks.

Monitoring and evaluation: directors

- Approve minutes of all board meetings
- Review regular reports from and monitor progress of any sub-committee meetings
- Review reports on activity and other matters relevant to decision making

Finance: directors

- Approve annual budgets
- Approve any change in agreed expenditure/activity that would materially affect the financial forecast
- Review quarterly management accounts and financial forecasts against budgets
- Review and adopt the annual audited financial statements and approve the appointment of auditors

Personnel: directors are responsible for

- Recruitment and appointment of the Artistic Director and General Manager. Individual members may also be involved in the recruitment of other senior roles as agreed. In particular, the eventual recruitment of a new Artistic Director following Jeffrey Skidmore's full or partial retirement, will recognise his recommendation and approval of the candidate.
- Reviewing the performance of the executive team and agreement of annual pay for staff
- Individual board members may, as agreed, informally mentor and support key members of the executive team