



'a phenomenal feat of musicianship' (The New Yorker)

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

Ex Cathedra Scholarships 2019-20

My time as a Scholar will have a big impact on my career, it has helped me to understand the standard you have to attain and maintain, and given me the confidence to approach and audition for other groups. I have made invaluable contacts, several of which have involved me in solo and ensemble work.

I recommend this scheme highly to anyone interested in a career as a classical solo or ensemble singer, the welcoming nature and 'family' feel of the whole organisation is an added bonus.

(Sacha Fullerton, 2017-18 Scholar)

What is it: A year-long choral Scholarship, worth £4000, for 4 of the UK's very best young singers

Who is it for: Singers who will finish their degrees this summer, or have finished in the past 2-3 years, are not continuing in education, and are focussed on being professional singers

Apply by: Thursday 9 May 2019, 12pm

Auditions: Thursday 23 May 2019

If you are shortlisted we will communicate the timetable to you on or by Thursday 16 May. The day will include group workshops as well as an individual audition, so please save the whole day.

About Ex Cathedra

Ex Cathedra is a leading UK choir and Early Music ensemble, based in Birmingham. We explore, research and commission the finest choral music and aim to set the highest standards for excellence in performance and training.

We perform perhaps the widest repertoire of any professional choir in the country - the best, the unfamiliar and the unexpected! Our 2019-20 season will include choral classics by Rachmaninoff, Bach and Beethoven to Roxanna Panufnik, Alec Roth, Liz Johnson and Penelope Thwaites.

Jeffrey Skidmore founded Ex Cathedra in 1969, and his track record of identifying and supporting young singers is unrivalled. The list of singers who credit Jeffrey and Ex Cathedra for supporting their early career includes Carolyn Sampson, Paul Agnew (Associate Musical Director of Les Arts Florissants), Nigel Short (Tenebrae), Benjamin Hulett, Andrew Tortise, Marcus Farnsworth, Samuel Boden, Patrick Dunachie (Kings Singers), Nick Ashby (Kings Singers) and many more.

We're delighted to invite applications for the third year of our Scholarships scheme. You can read more about the [2017-18](#) and [2018-19](#) Scholars on our website, several of whom have continued to work with us as professional singers since.

What we offer

Successful candidates will receive guaranteed payment of £4,000, paid in equal monthly instalments. Additional paid work might be offered during the year.

You will gain real life experience of working with a professional choir, including time and diary management, and develop your singing in a professional and supportive environment by:

- rehearsing and performing a wide range of repertoire stylistically, learning the different approaches required
- observing further rehearsals and concerts given by our Consort of 10 singers
- observing solo rehearsals, which in 2019-20 will involve Carolyn Sampson and Roderick Williams amongst others
- attending termly one-to-one feedback sessions with Jeffrey Skidmore
- accessing masterclasses given by soloists and via our links to the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
- observing our Vocal Tutors as they deliver projects in schools and hospitals

Our ambition is that the scheme will help your professional development, and increase your chance of being offered professional work by Ex Cathedra and other choirs. By working alongside and learning from some of the UK's finest professional singers, you should develop an invaluable network of contacts and raise your profile within the industry.

Your commitment

If you are offered and accept a Scholarship, we will send you a contract setting out our expectations. In short:

- you are expected to complete the year and make the most of the opportunities provided!
- you must reliably attend c.25 rehearsals and c.20 concerts over the course of the year, dates to be provided on your work schedule at the beginning of the year
- you must attend your termly feedback sessions with Jeffrey Skidmore
- you will be provided with complimentary tickets and encouraged to attend concerts that you are not performing in, help out with stewarding etc
- to write 1-2 short accounts of your experience during the year
- to acknowledge your Scholarship with Ex Cathedra in your future biographies

Aside from these commitments you are encouraged to build up a portfolio of freelance work.

We will undertake a DBS safeguarding check before you observe any of our work with children or vulnerable adults.

Who is eligible

To apply, we expect you:

- will be about to embark or have embarked on a career as a professional singer in the last 2-3 years
- normally you will have studied or are about to complete a degree-level course in music with singing lessons
- or, exceptionally, you have recently changed career to focus on being a professional singer

If you are in full-time or part-time education (undergraduate or postgraduate), you are not eligible to apply unless you will have completed your course by the time your Scholarship starts. If you are studying at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire do take a look at our [Student Scholarship scheme](#).

If you aren't sure, please give us a call to discuss on 0121 616 3410.

How to apply

Please complete the application form below and return it with your supporting reference by 12pm on Thursday 9 May 2019. Late entries are unlikely to be accepted.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend our workshop and audition day on Thursday 23 May in Birmingham. Please reserve the date in your diary. During the the day all applicants may be involved in a short, informal, unticketed performance of repertoire rehearsed during the workshop session.

We will let you know whether or not you are invited to attend for an audition on or by Thursday 16 May.

Ex Cathedra would like to thank the Bernarr Rainbow Trust, D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust, Eranda Foundation, Fidelio Trust, Fenton Arts Trust, Foyle Foundation, Idlewild Trust, Mercers Company, the Radcliffe Trust and several generous individual donors for their support of this scheme.



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SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM 2019-20

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|---|--|---|--|
| Name: | | | |
| Address: | | | |
| Email: | | Age at application: (20-23 / 24-29 / 30-39 / 40+) | |
| Phone: | | Voice (SATB): | |
| University/College: | | | |
| Graduation date: | | Degree obtained/expected: | |
| Current work place/job, if applicable: | | | |
| Singing experience: | | | |
| Current singing teacher: | | | |
| Where/how did you hear about this scheme? | | | |
| Short personal statement. What are your reasons for applying? What do you hope to achieve during a Scholarship year? What are your long-term aspirations? | | | |

Please complete and return this form by Thursday 9 May, 12pm. Please include your singing CV, and a letter of recommendation from your singing teacher, or equivalent, and send to:

Ashley Turnell, Concerts Producer, Ex Cathedra, CBSO Centre, Berkley Street, Birmingham B1 2LF / ash@excathedra.co.uk.