

# National Open Youth Orchestra

## 2023-2024

## APPLICANT'S INFORMATION PACK

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# What is the National Open Youth Orchestra?

Launched in 2018, the National Open Youth Orchestra (NOYO) is the world's first national orchestra where talented 11-25 year old disabled and non-disabled musicians rehearse and perform together. NOYO creates a creative, supportive environment in which the traditional barriers to the progression of young disabled musicians have been removed.

NOYO encourages musical excellence by offering unique and challenging opportunities to young people with a lot of musical potential, who want to perform live as part of a pioneering ensemble. There are five NOYO Centres where musicians rehearse regionally: in Birmingham, Bournemouth, Bristol, Cardiff and London. Musicians then come together for an annual residential and concerts.

Our NOYO Centres are run in partnership with leading arts organisations:

- Birmingham NOYO Centre – in partnership with B:Music, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) and Services For Education
- Bournemouth NOYO Centre - in partnership with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra
- Bristol NOYO Centre - in partnership with Bristol Beacon
- Cardiff NOYO Centre - in partnership with BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama
- London NOYO Centre - in partnership with Barbican and Guildhall School of Music & Drama

NOYO is also about shaping a modern orchestra that's more inclusive. We show that a diverse group of musicians can inspire exciting new music that marries the sounds of electronic and acoustic instruments. Our first major commission, 'The Umbrella' by Liam Taylor-West, won a 2018 Ivor's Composer Award.

# Who is NOYO for?

NOYO is for young people aged 11-25 (applicants who will be 26 on or after 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023 are ineligible), disabled or non-disabled, who are looking for opportunities to:

- Develop their skills in playing with other young people as part of a diverse and dynamic orchestra where music is not only played from notation but also learned by ear and improvised
- Improve their skills on acoustic or electronic instruments
- Collaborate with cutting-edge contemporary composers
- Devise new music
- Play high-profile concerts
- Progress personally - meet new people, travel to new places and have fun.

There is still inequality in musical opportunities for young disabled and non-disabled people, so to help everyone, below is a summary of the entry requirements:

NOYO is for **young disabled people** with hidden and/or physical impairments, and/or learning difficulties who:

- Have the potential to play live music independently, (i.e. without physical assistance from another person) with control, intent and focus
- Already play a musical instrument (acoustic or electronic) **OR** don't yet play an instrument due to barriers, but control assistive technology or a communication aid (such as an EyeGaze computer) to a standard that could translate to playing an electronic instrument such as the Clarion

- Could progress to a career in music if there were no disabling barriers in the way - barriers typically include inaccessible instruments, music and a lack of appropriate opportunities.

NOYO is for **young non-disabled people** who:

- Already play an acoustic or electronic musical instrument with fluency and flair
- Have the potential to play live music with control, intent and focus
- Could progress to a career in music.

All NOYO applicants need to demonstrate passion, potential and perseverance:

1. A **passion** for music
2. The **potential** to play a musical instrument with a high degree of control and expression, given appropriately accessible instruments, music and opportunities
3. A determination to **persevere** both musically and personally.

You don't need to have passed any exams on your instrument to apply for NOYO, because that could exclude many talented young people.

## What music does NOYO play?

NOYO plays a range of accessible musical repertoire that is:

1. Specially written for NOYO by contemporary composers
2. Re-worked from existing pieces of music
3. Devised by NOYO musicians and Music Leaders

## NOYO Members and NOYO Trainees

To ensure that all our musicians feel confident, both personally and musically within NOYO, there are two groups within the orchestra:

1. **NOYO Members** have one-to-one lessons and pastoral support, attend all rehearsals and the residential, and play in concerts. NOYO Members need to be available and committed to attend all NOYO rehearsals, the residential and concerts, locally and nationally throughout each year, as outlined in the following paragraphs.
2. **NOYO Trainees** have one-to-one lessons and pastoral support but need to gain more confidence and skills before they can attend residentials and play in concerts. They are invited to join some rehearsals. NOYO Trainees have up to three years to progress towards becoming a Member.

If you are offered a place in NOYO, we will invite you to join NOYO as a Member or a Trainee, depending on what we think will be best for you. Selection of NOYO Trainees and Members will be decided through careful consideration by the audition panel.

## What does being in NOYO involve?

### One-to-one tuition

All NOYO musicians are required to have regular one-to-one tuition on their instrument - at least **20 lessons** per year. If you are not already having music lessons, NOYO can help to arrange these for you.

### Regional rehearsals

NOYO Members are required to participate in a minimum of **10 regional rehearsals** per year at their NOYO Centre

- London (EC2Y 9BH)
- Bristol (BS10 5SJ)
- Bournemouth (BH15 1DF)
- Birmingham (B1 2EA and B12 9QH)
- Cardiff (CF10 3ER)

The exact dates of rehearsals will be confirmed around June 2023, but take place roughly once a month, on either Saturdays or Sundays. NOYO

members must attend **all** scheduled rehearsals. NOYO Trainees must come to 3 regional rehearsals per year.

## Residential

Our national residential is where NOYO Members from all NOYO Centres get together for three days and nights to play music together, prepare for concerts, and socialise. NOYO Members are required to attend all three days of the residential. Trainees are not required to attend the residential.

Our residential venue is fully accessible and we provide on-site accommodation free of charge for NOYO musicians (and a parent /guardian / PA where needed), catering for young disabled people with a wide range of needs.

The 2024 residential will take place during the Easter holidays, from Wednesday 3rd - Saturday 6th April.

## Concerts

NOYO will perform four concerts in 2024. Dates and venues are to be confirmed. NOYO Members are expected to perform in all concerts. NOYO Trainees will not perform in concerts but are asked to attend one concert as an audience member.

## Pastoral Support

We have a Pastoral Support Officer who works with NOYO Trainees and Members, and the NOYO team, to ensure that musicians' access and wellbeing needs are met.

## Publicity

As a pioneering orchestra with a mission to raise public awareness about what young disabled musicians can achieve, we want NOYO to get publicity and media attention. NOYO events are often photographed or filmed. Images and recordings of the orchestra and musicians will be used in magazines and newspapers, on television, the Internet and on social media. A musician and their family have no obligation to take part in individual media interviews unless they want to, but being a NOYO musician does

involve being ‘in the public eye’ and having pictures and videos taken. Musicians are also asked to have their portrait on the NOYO website in the [musicians gallery](https://noyo.org.uk/the-orchestra/) (https://noyo.org.uk/the-orchestra/ ↗)

All media activity is conducted in a way that respects our [Privacy policy](http://bit.ly/PrivacyAndCookiePolicy) (http://bit.ly/PrivacyAndCookiePolicy ↗) and [Safeguarding policy](https://bit.ly/OUMSafeguardingPolicy) (https://bit.ly/OUMSafeguardingPolicy ↗).

View some examples of media articles and social media posts with NOYO musicians:

- [Music Teacher Magazine article](https://bit.ly/NOYOMusicTeacherArticle) (https://bit.ly/NOYOMusicTeacherArticle ↗)
- [Classic FM article](https://bit.ly/ClassicFMArticle) using NOYO social media post (https://bit.ly/ClassicFMArticle ↗)

*Please note that for all rehearsals, the residential, concerts and other NOYO activities, musicians with additional support needs should be accompanied by a parent/guardian or PA. In some cases, musicians aged under 16 who do not have additional support needs may also need to be accompanied by a parent/guardian.*

## How long can musicians stay with NOYO?

NOYO Members can stay with NOYO for as long as they:

1. Are within the 11-25 age range for NOYO musicians;
2. Complete the annual NOYO Agreement;
3. Show commitment to NOYO activities. If musicians don't attend NOYO events without a good reason, or if they don't respect the NOYO Code of Conduct, they can lose their place.

NOYO Trainees have up to three years to become a Member. If a Trainee doesn't progress to becoming a Member in this time, then we hope they will have had a great experience, but their time with NOYO will come to an end.

## What does NOYO cost?

Participation in NOYO rehearsals, the residential and concerts is free to NOYO Trainees and NOYO Members because we want to reduce barriers to music. This is unusual - most National Youth Orchestras charge an annual membership fee. Open Up Music, the charity behind the National Open Youth Orchestra, fundraises to cover the costs of running the orchestra. There are currently no plans to charge for NOYO membership.

We do ask musicians/their support circle to pay for their one-to-one music lessons and you are expected to cover the costs of travel to one-to-one lessons, rehearsals, residential and concerts.

## Does NOYO offer financial support?

We are committed to reducing financial barriers. Within our financial capabilities, we want to make sure that no one has to turn down a place in NOYO for financial reasons.

If you require financial support to participate in NOYO, please speak to us. We can provide support to cover costs including one-to-one lessons, travel, PA costs, musical instruments, and anything else that may arise. The support that we can offer will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

## Applications for 2023-2024

For the year September 2023 to August 2024, we are inviting applications from young musicians who can attend rehearsals at any of our five NOYO Centres: Birmingham, Bournemouth, Bristol, Cardiff and London.

Across all five NOYO Centres, we are interested in applications from young musicians who play a *wide variety* of acoustic or electronic instruments. This year we are particularly interested in young musicians who play:


- Woodwind
- Violin, viola, cello
- Double bass, or other bass instruments (including electronic)



- Electric guitar

Given the current make-up of the orchestra, this year we are unlikely to offer a place to musicians whose instrument is piano/keyboard, drums or percussion, unless they also play a second instrument.

## How to apply

Please complete the online application form on our website at [noyo.org.uk](https://noyo.org.uk) (<https://noyo.org.uk> ) which will be live between 1st - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

1. As part of the application, please submit a short film (1 to 2 minutes) of you playing your instrument or using assistive technology/an electronic communication aid, by following the instructions in the online application form.
2. If you don't have access to the internet and would still like to apply, or experience difficulty sending us the short film as part of the application, please contact Kate Duffy, Programme Officer [kate.duffy@openupmusic.org](mailto:kate.duffy@openupmusic.org)

## Auditions for shortlisted candidates

Before we invite anyone to audition, we may first get in touch for a telephone conversation to find out more about each young person and think about what kind of audition might be best.

The word 'audition' can sound quite formal and intimidating, but that's not what NOYO auditions are like! It's just an opportunity for us to meet musicians, to play some music together and to have a chat.

We film all auditions, so they can be viewed again by everyone on the audition panel.

Invitations to audition will be sent to shortlisted candidates by Friday 21st April 2023. Auditions will take place in Birmingham, Bournemouth, Bristol, Cardiff and London from late April through to early June 2023.

We understand that in some cases, it may be necessary to arrange auditions where we travel to visit individual young people, if you aren't able to attend our audition venues.

## Selection

We will inform applicants of our decision no later than the end of June 2023. Those offered places in NOYO will be offered either a Member or Trainee position.


**Please note that being invited to audition does not guarantee a place in the National Open Youth Orchestra.**

When choosing applicants, we have to consider the need to create a cohesive musical ensemble that can rehearse and perform both locally and nationally.


## Can I attend a NOYO rehearsal and meet some musicians before applying?

We run Open Rehearsals in February and March where you can watch a rehearsal at one of our NOYO Centres, meet musicians and chat to Music Leaders.

This will be the first year of our Cardiff NOYO Centre, so here, instead of an Open Rehearsal, you can attend an Open Day where you can meet some of the Cardiff NOYO team and see where you would be rehearsing. You can also attend one of the Open Rehearsals at another NOYO Centre to see a rehearsal in action.

View more details and [register to come](https://bit.ly/OpenRehearsals2023) (https://bit.ly/OpenRehearsals2023 )

## What if I'm not able to apply this year?

If you're not ready to apply this year, or we don't currently have space for your instrument, but you are interested in auditioning for NOYO in the future, please [complete this form](https://bit.ly/NOYOAlert) (https://bit.ly/NOYOAlert ) and we will update you when applications open again.

## Summary of timeline for applications:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
By the start of February 2023 (see registration form for exact dates)	Register to attend an Open Rehearsal, if you would like to
1st - 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	Send in your application
March - May 2023	Before we invite anyone to audition, we may first get in touch for a phone conversation to find out more about each young person and establish what kind of audition might be best
By 21st April 2023	Invitation to audition
May and early June 2023	Auditions for shortlisted candidates
By end of June 2023	NOYO Trainees and Members announced Regional rehearsal dates announced
September 2023	NOYO activity starts for 2023-2024

Good luck with your application!

## Any questions?

If you have any questions about entry requirements, applying or auditioning after reading this document, please feel free to contact Kate Duffy

[kate.duffy@openupmusic.org](mailto:kate.duffy@openupmusic.org)