



ROYAL
COLLEGE
OF MUSIC
London

FUTURE MUSIC FUND CASE FOR SUPPORT



INTRODUCTION



Above

Lily Harriss HonRCM,
Director of Development

Cover image

Students
© Phil Rowley

Dear RCM Family,

Music transcends borders, cultures, and generations; it fosters understanding, social cohesion, and well-being. Our musicians are the custodians of this bright future, enriching lives through their talent and dedication.

Why support us? The Royal College of Music embodies excellence, offering top-tier education and training that promote innovation and research. We empower talented students from all backgrounds to develop their skills and contribute significantly to the global musical landscape.

Our commitment to quality education provides a path to success. However, access to this education often requires philanthropic support. Your philanthropic investment in us ensures aspiring musicians and leaders have the resources necessary to excel. Tuition fees and government funding are insufficient to cover the cost of excellence in music education, with a funding gap of approximately £2,000 per student. To run our full talent, innovation, and access programme, we must raise £6 million each year.

We are proud to be recognised as the global leader in performing arts education, ranked number one in the QS World University Rankings for four consecutive years (2025, 2024, 2023, 2022). Our founding values of inclusivity and excellence guide our mission. Our distinguished staff, alumni, and exceptional performance opportunities support these values.

Despite our strong heritage and excellent facilities, tuition fees and government funding fall short. We have launched the Future Music Fund to nurture talent, nurture innovation, and widen access to address this.

We invite you to join us in this vital mission. Together, we can ensure a vibrant future for music and its transformative power in society.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Lily Harriss', written in a cursive style.

Lily Harriss HonRCM,
Director of Development



Your support directly enables the RCM to remain at the forefront of music education, widening access to the next generation of musicians and driving innovation in performance and research that will help shape the future for the industry and wider society.

James Williams LVO FRCM
Director of the Royal College of Music



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF MUSIC

RCM trumpet players
at the BBC Proms 2024
© Chris Christodoulou

RCM Performance
Laboratory © Phil Rowley

The Royal College of Music shapes the future of music through talent, innovation, and access. Today, we are home to an extraordinary and diverse community: the world's most promising composers and performers, educators, scientists, technologists, philanthropists, historians, and music lovers. We recognise the vital contribution each makes to a vibrant music ecosystem and the impact this has on society.

Thanks to the generosity and expertise of this community, we have transformed our London campus. Our home now features a new performance hall, a state-of-the-art studio, and an interactive Museum, with a welcoming central atrium café and beautiful courtyard at its heart. In this inspirational environment, we are ideally placed to invest in our core purpose: providing music education and professional training at the highest international level for students from all backgrounds.



A young woman with long blonde hair is shown in profile, smiling as she plays a euphonium. She is wearing a white t-shirt and a red floral skirt. In the background, other students in school uniforms are also playing euphoniums, slightly out of focus.

FUTURE MUSIC FUND

Our supporters share our belief in the transformative power of music education and research. By investing in our comprehensive faculty, rich performance programmes and groundbreaking research initiatives, you can catalyse personal and societal change. With your support, students emerge as virtuosic performers and empathetic, culturally aware citizens, ready to navigate and enrich communities worldwide.

In addition to tuition fees and government income, we need £6 million per year to make this vision possible. The Future Music Fund convenes our philanthropic community to meet this need, nurturing talent, sparking innovation, and widening access.

We invite you to join us!

TALENT

The future of music relies on promising young musicians fulfilling their potential. Vital scholarships and bursaries serve the best global talent, no matter their financial circumstances.

As the global leader in music and the performing arts, over 950 young people study here, guided by our expert faculty, visiting professors, and international artists. Our student community stretches beyond the UK to over 60 countries, with even more represented through our illustrious alumni network.

This excellence comes from 140 years of national and international outreach. Since our founding day, inspired philanthropic investment has enabled students from any background to flourish here. Today, with the burden of tuition fees and living costs, this support is more vital than ever.

More than 50% of our students rely on philanthropic support and scholarship funding. Your gift will ensure the world's greatest young talent shapes the future of music.

Opposite

RCM Junior Department
bassoonists © Chris Christodoulou

Below

RCM Symphony
Orchestra conducted
by Jac van Steen, Royal
Festival Hall 2024
© Chris Christodoulou



The Parnassus Scholarship has helped me in my musical studies this year. With the financial situation getting worse for everyone, but especially students who don't have much disposable income, I feel particularly grateful to be benefitting from RCM and donor support so that I can concentrate my energies on developing my career and striving to becoming the best musician I can be.

Toril Azzalini, Parnassus Scholar 2022 23



As a Head of Faculty and former student at the RCM, it's incredible to see the impact of scholarships on our work as musical educators. These enable talented and musically inquisitive students to have the ability to be able to join our faculty, whatever their means. Here, we have students willing to experiment and a drive to succeed. This is only possible because of the generosity of our benefactors. The impact of scholarships is immeasurable, and I say this not just as a Head of Faculty but as a former scholarship holder myself.

Marie Lloyd MA ARCM(PG), Head of Woodwind



WE NEED £3 MILLION
PER YEAR TO SUPPORT
TALENT, INCLUDING:

- Scholarships and awards providing financial support for excellence
- Matching gift scholarship programme for European students

INNOVATION



Above

Arie Dakesian in the Performance Laboratory
© Phil Rowley

Below

Josephine Shaw in the Performance Laboratory
© Phil Rowley

The Royal College of Music was founded as part of a radical arts, science, and industry programme. Today, this unwavering spirit of innovation and collaboration makes us a dynamic place to study, a leading research centre, and one of the world's most sustainable conservatoires. We foster artistic exploration, experimentation, and research in music to benefit the wider society. Our faculty-led performance initiatives and interdisciplinary projects push boundaries in music performance and scholarship.

With state-of-the-art facilities, we encourage musicians to explore the possibilities of composition, performance, and production. We partner with leading consultants, reputable arts organisations and local communities, delivering unique career-building opportunities and a direct route to the music industry.

We enable musicians to discover their professional identity and gain hands-on experience. We also help our alumni develop entrepreneurial skills and build a fulfilling professional portfolio. An example is our Accelerate scheme, which supports graduates each year with a new creative project, social enterprise, or business idea or to take an existing initiative to the next level.

We demonstrate how music can positively shape society, medicine, culture, and technology through the Centre for Performance Science and the Wolfson Centre in Music & Material Culture. Our sustainability strategy, which calls for a responsible and inclusive future for all, underpins all this.

By investing in innovation, you can support performance programmes as well as critical research and dissemination to shape the fast-changing world around us.



WE NEED £2 MILLION
A YEAR TO SUPPORT
INNOVATION, including:

- Our performance programmes, including symphonic, opera, chamber, solo, masterclasses, showcases, and international collaborations.
- Advancing environmental and sustainability plans to lead the sector.
- Leading research into the impact of music focussing on the connections between music, health, and wellbeing.
- Expanding digital broadcasting, immersive and multi-media, and a variety of platforms including online platforms, for performances, learning and teaching.



Continued philanthropic support will elevate and sustain the Royal College of Music's world leading Performance Laboratory, enhancing groundbreaking research and creating unparalleled opportunities for students to excel in the modern music industry and in society.

Aaron Williamon, Head of the RCM's Centre for Performance Science



ACCESS

Widening access to music education and learning opportunities is fundamental to our vision. The RCM is deeply committed to supporting students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, ensuring they have access to high-quality musical education and opportunities to excel in classical music.

We act as the bridge and connector for young musicians, especially those who face inequality of opportunity due to their geographical or financial situation. We convene local and international communities through concerts, masterclasses, and education programmes. We have partnerships with schools, arts organisations, community centres, and other charitable organisations, providing access to music education for all.

We do this through our Junior Programmes. Since 1926, the Royal College of Music Junior Department (RCMJD) has offered advanced musical training to talented young musicians between the ages of 8 and 18. Our learning and participation programme, RCM Sparks, has provided inclusive opportunities for young people to engage in music education since 2007.

We offer informal and engaging music education and participation to families, schools, community centres, and people of all ages and abilities. Our high-quality performances, events, talks, and exhibitions invite everyone to explore and enjoy music online and in person.

Our Access and Participation Plan outlines several key strategies to address the barriers faced by students from low-income households. These initiatives are designed to improve access, participation, and success in conservatoire education, with a particular focus on those from disadvantaged backgrounds. We ensure our students have the financial support and access to the necessary instruments.

Your gift expands these initiatives, enriching our community and society.



Above
Charlie Siem

Below
RCM Sparks cellists with
Robin Thompson-Clarke
© Chris Christodoulou



WE NEED **£1 MILLION** PER YEAR TO SUPPORT ACCESS, INCLUDING:

- Deepen community engagement to provide access to music-making for society's health and wellbeing.
- Increase bursaries for the youngest of our learners with bursaries to support musicians with the greatest financial need.
- Provide high quality instruments for young musicians to reach their potential.

My time attending Saturdays at RCMJD was meaningful on many levels and being able to participate in widening the outreach of this wonderful programme is a pleasure and a privilege. Being exposed to the quality of RCM teachers makes all the difference at such a young age and certainly my journey was defined by such relationships and inspiration.

Charlie Siem, violinist, and RCM Junior Department alumnus

OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES

We are immensely proud of the career development opportunities we offer our students. We emphasise the need for students to be well-rounded, confident, and versatile communicators in their professional engagements and beyond. We have a vibrant research culture that promotes curiosity and innovation to advanced doctoral level and our students can create bespoke courses to suit their aspirations.

Our graduates are highly employable. The Higher Education Statistics Agency graduate employment survey showed that an impressive 90% of RCM graduates from our 2020-21 cohort were employed or further study fifteen months after graduating. This percentage was captured at a challenging time for arts sector employability.

We provide the ideal environment for our graduates to become industry leaders, change-makers, and entrepreneurs. The RCM's Creative Careers Centre (CCC) is recognised internationally for its innovative approach to supporting young musicians. We are also the only UK conservatoire with this dedicated career service that supports students and graduates for up to five years after graduation. We offer resources, guidance, funding opportunities, bespoke career advice, coaching, mentoring, online workshops, and presentations by industry specialists. We also provide professional opportunities, including performances and teaching work.



The CCC partners with leading consultants, reputable arts organisations, and local communities, delivering unique career-building opportunities and a direct route to the music industry.

Described at its foundation as an institution whose doors were to be 'thrown open to the whole world', the Royal College of Music is an international and diverse community. We work together to create and sustain a community where diversity is recognised, valued and celebrated. We are pro-active in advancing equality and inclusive practice in our staff and student recruitment and admissions processes, in our research activity, in our teaching and our artistic programme, and the College's working environment.

We will endeavour through effective and collaborative action to create a culture which values diversity, and in which students, staff and visitors give due respect to other people and their work or ideas.

Above
RCM Sparks
participatory event
© Chris Christodoulou

Right
RCM Junior Department
musicians © Chris
Christodoulou



IMPACT IN ACTION

SACCONI QUARTET

Ben Hancox, Hannah Dawson, Robin Ashwell, Cara Berridge String Quartet

"We formed our quartet 'officially' at the RCM in September 2001. We had been playing together already, for external engagements, and we knew we had a great chemistry, musically and personally. At the end of our first year together, we won the Intercollegiate String Quartet Prize, and that really set us off on this wonderful and crazy path that we're still navigating. As RCM Quartet in Association, we run a chamber ensemble project each year, performing once in College and then again shortly afterwards in our own festival in Folkestone. Working with RCM string players is a great pleasure and often a very moving experience, and these concerts have been some of the most thrilling and rewarding of our career."



JOLENE KHOR

MMus, 2021 Composer for screen

"The best part of my RCM learning experience was working with other musicians and recording my compositions, which helped develop my skills as a composer for screen. I wouldn't previously have had the confidence to host my own recording session, but now I've published my works and recorded them with orchestras. This is all thanks to my wonderful professors, who taught me so much – I wouldn't be where I am today without their help. I work on games and films with studios and companies such as High Rollers DnD, ZM Films, Omnivore Games, The Storyteller Squad, The Writer's Room: 7th Sea, and The Gods Fabled: Soil Frontier. I've been nominated for and won a few awards since graduating, including the Cannes World Film Festival and Best Music Composer at the Tokyo Film Awards. I conducted at the Netflix Queen Charlotte Orchestra pop-up concert in 2023 and have recorded with the Budapest Scoring Orchestra, all while working as a part-time teacher, music arranger and producer."



ALIM BEISEMBAYEV

ArtDip, 2023 Pianist

"The Royal College of Music is a very special place to me. It is where I first heard masterclasses given by incredible musicians such as Sir András Schiff and Maxim Vengerov – they were nothing short of inspiring. The RCM's prestigious and illustrious Keyboard Faculty, and the chance to study with Professor Vanessa Latache, were among the reasons I wanted to attend. I completed my Masters and Artist Diploma in Performance in 2023, by which time my career was already developing thanks to winning the Leeds Piano Competition. It led to performances at Wigmore Hall and in South Korea, Germany, France, Spain, Poland, and Kazakhstan. I also had the pleasure of performing with the RCM Symphony Orchestra and Sir Antonio Pappano in January 2022. At the 2023 BBC Proms I was asked at the last moment to perform Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto no 2 – the RCM had prepared me mentally and musically to be ready to say yes to such an opportunity."

Above

Sacconi Quartet
© Emilie Bailey

Left

Jolene Khor
© Kuang Yee

Right

Alim Beisembayev
© Nabin Maharjan

WHY YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Your support provides critical income for our charitable mission. Tuition fees and government funding are insufficient to cover the cost of excellence in music education, with a funding gap of approximately £2,000 per student. To run our full talent, innovation, and access programme, we must raise £6 million each year from private philanthropy, corporate partnerships, and venue hire.

At the same time, we still feel the impact of the pandemic. We have made savings without compromising the student experience, including deferring capital investments and limiting discretionary spending. Nevertheless, these savings cannot fully compensate for lost income.

Despite this, and thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we remain committed to talent, innovation, and access at the highest level. This has been recognised with consistent accolades, including:

- Global No. 1 institution for Performing Arts 2022, 2023 and 2024, and inaugural No. 1 for Music in the 2024 QS World University Rankings by Subject
- No. 1 in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 and People & Planet University League table for universities with fewer than 5,000 students, the only comprehensive and independent league table of UK universities ranked by environmental and ethical performance
- RCM teaching acknowledged as 'Outstanding,' achieving a Gold ranking in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023.



Above

RCM Symphony Orchestra at the BBC Proms 2024 in the Royal Albert Hall
© Chris Christodoulou

MAKE AN IMPACT

Your contribution nurtures talent by providing scholarships and performance opportunities, drives innovation with pioneering projects and research, and expands access to world-class education for all. Choose to support one of these pillars, ensuring a vibrant, inclusive, and innovative musical community.

The Royal College of Music provides a high return on investment (ROI) on donated income. A 2019 Institute of Fundraising benchmark found that the voluntary sector's average ROI is £3.37 per £1 invested.

We are proud that our 3-year rolling ROI is £4.47 per £1 invested (2022–2023), which reflects our relationship-based fundraising. We have a robust gift acceptance policy, and 100% of all fundraising goes directly to the cause.

OUTLOOK AND SUSTAINABILITY

We welcome James Williams LVO FRCM, as our 11th Director of the Royal College of Music. With a background in music education, James' former positions include working most recently as the Managing Director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and as a member of the RCM Council and a Board member of the Association of British Orchestras. In addition, he was recently a music advisor for the Coronation Service for King Charles. He will be working across the College and with supporters and alumni on the revised strategy in 2027 to outline the way forward for the future of music and RCM's continued resilience and growth. The founding principles of access and excellence will remain paramount to the following ten-year vision for the RCM beginning in 2027.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to those who support our vision. We invite new supporters to join our RCM family and match your interests in music with a tailored opportunity to support.

**Join us in making
a lasting impact on
the world of music**



We couldn't resist the opportunity to continue nurturing outstanding musical talent from all over the world, regardless of personal means and circumstances. How better to invest than in our universal language? Where better than in the world's premier conservatoire, here in the heart of London? And what better to invest in than the crème de la crème of our young musicians, itching to take up bow and baton and turn the next page?

Mrs Anne Wadsworth OBE
and Mr Brian Wadsworth



CREATE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

Pledging a gift in your Will to the RCM is a meaningful way to make a profound impact. For example, in 2023–24, over £1.1 million in scholarships was awarded thanks to 92 gifts made in this unique way. The Legacy Ensemble gathers supporters annually to celebrate and illustrate how past gifts continue to transform students' lives. Our team is committed to sustaining your impact through ongoing communication and stewardship with named contacts of family or friends. We are proud that legacy giving keeps cherished memories alive, ensuring lasting impact at the Royal College of Music and beyond.



Certainly, there's a warm glow in being associated with something like this. Chris left money to four charities, and we can see with our own eyes the straightforward benefit it's having. You can hear the enthusiasm and excitement in the words of the students when they write. Chris's benefaction has helped create that excitement and engagement, and it's very directly evident what the benefit is.

Christopher Lawrence, friend of the late Christopher Hogwood
CBE HonDMus



We provide a dedicated service for anyone with questions about gifts in Wills. To start this conversation, please contact **Henry Purser** (henry.purser@rcm.ac.uk).

Thank you

For further information on the Future Music Fund, please contact:

David Sutherland
Head of Philanthropy
philanthropy@rcm.ac.uk

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<https://www.rcm.ac.uk/support>



ROYAL
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RCM Symphony Orchestra at the BBC Proms 2024
© Chris Christodoulou



FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

Patron His Majesty King Charles III
Chairman Lord Black of Brentwood
Director James Williams LVO FRCM
Director of Development Lily Harriss HonRCM

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