



Simply IC Marketing Growth Award

Growing participation. Reaching new audiences. Strengthening communities.

About the Award

At Simply IC, we believe great marketing can help more people discover, participate in and enjoy music. Across Greater London, churches, choirs, orchestras, ensembles, music charities and other not-for-profit organisations deliver outstanding musical activity. However, excellent music alone does not always guarantee that people will discover it. Limited marketing resources, expertise or capacity can make it difficult to reach new audiences, attract participants and build lasting relationships with local communities. The **Simply IC Marketing Growth Award** has been established to help address this challenge.

The Award provides funding for marketing, communications and audience-development activity that helps eligible not-for-profit organisations grow participation in music.

An award totalling up to **£3,000** is available and may be awarded to one organisation or shared between several outstanding projects.

We are looking for organisations with a strong musical offer and a clear ambition to reach more people. Applicants do not need to be exclusively music organisations. We welcome applications from any eligible not-for-profit organisation where music forms a meaningful part of its work or proposed project.

The Award is not intended simply to fund the delivery of musical activity. Instead, it is designed to provide the marketing and audience-development support that can help excellent musical activity reach further.

Successful projects should demonstrate how the funding will help an organisation:

- reach new audiences

- attract new participants
- widen access to music
- strengthen engagement with its community, or
- build the marketing capacity needed to create sustainable future growth

Award-funded activity must take place between **July 2027 and July 2028**.

Our ambition is simple: to help excellent musical activity reach more people, especially those in traditionally underserved communities or with fewer opportunities to experience live music, and, in doing so, create stronger and more connected communities

Who Can Apply?

The Award is open to eligible not-for-profit organisations delivering or supporting musical activity within Greater London.

This could include:

- Choirs and choral societies
- Orchestras
- Chamber groups and ensembles
- Churches, cathedrals and other places of worship with established musical activity
- Music charities and charitable trusts
- Community music organisations
- Opera companies
- Youth music organisations and ensembles
- Music education charities
- Educational charities delivering musical activity
- Not-for-profit music festivals
- Amateur music societies
- Not-for-profit venues delivering their own musical or participation programmes
- Community or heritage organisations where music forms a meaningful part of their work
- Other recognised not-for-profit organisations delivering musical activity.

What We Fund

The **Simply IC Marketing Growth Award** funds marketing, communications and audience-development activity designed to increase participation in music.

Funding could be used for:

- Audience-development campaigns
- Choir, orchestra or ensemble recruitment campaigns
- Marketing for Come & Sing events or open rehearsals
- Campaigns designed to attract first-time concertgoers
- Marketing activity to reach families, young people or underrepresented audiences
- Funding chorister places to enable more people to participate in church and cathedral music
- Community engagement and outreach campaigns
- School and education engagement campaigns
- Digital advertising
- Social media campaigns
- Email marketing
- Printed publicity and direct mail
- Local press and PR activity
- Photography, video or creative content required for a campaign
- Website or landing-page development directly connected to an audience-growth campaign
- Audience research and consultation
- Data collection and audience insight
- Developing relationships with community partners
- Professional marketing, communications or audience-development support
- Freelance or agency support to plan and deliver a marketing campaign
- Strategic marketing planning connected to growing musical participation
- Other marketing-led activity that can clearly demonstrate how it will help more people engage with music.

This list is not exhaustive, and we welcome other marketing-led activities that can demonstrate how they will help more people engage with music.

Building Capacity and Securing Future Growth

We recognise that effective marketing is about much more than advertising. Marketing is about understanding people, communicating purpose, building relationships, reaching communities and creating the conditions that allow an organisation to grow. For this reason, the Award may also support professional grant-writing or fundraising support where it forms part of a clear strategy to grow musical participation.

For example, a community choir may have developed plans for a substantial three-year schools and community singing programme but lack the internal expertise to make a strong application to a major funder. The Simply IC Marketing Growth

Award could contribute towards employing an experienced grant writer or fundraising professional to help develop that application.

The applicant would need to demonstrate:

- what larger project it is seeking funding for
- how that project would increase musical participation or widen access
- which funding opportunity it intends to pursue
- why professional support is required
- how securing the larger grant could create meaningful and sustainable community impact

We consider this part of the wider marketing and communications process: understanding an audience, articulating a compelling proposition, communicating impact and securing the resources required to reach more people.

What We Do Not Fund

The Award is a marketing and audience-growth grant, rather than a general music project fund.

We would therefore not normally fund:

- General running costs
- Activity that has no clear marketing or audience-development purpose
- Musical activity with no strategy for increasing participation or engagement
- Instruments or equipment as a standalone purchase
- General venue hire
- Performer fees unrelated to an audience-growth initiative (However, where engaging a musician is a core part of an access or audience development scheme, those performer fees would be eligible).
- Projects outside Greater London
- Activity taking place outside the eligible funding period.

Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Be a registered charity, church, educational charity or recognised not-for-profit organisation.
- Deliver or support musical activity within Greater London.

- Demonstrate that music forms a meaningful part of the activity for which funding is requested.
- Demonstrate how the proposed activity will increase participation, widen access, develop audiences or strengthen community engagement through music.
- Undertake the funded activity between July 2027 and July 2028.
- Have appropriate financial management arrangements.
- Have the organisational capacity to deliver the proposed activity.
- Identify a named person responsible for the project.
- Agree to measure and share project outcomes with Simply IC if successful.

Existing Simply IC clients

Existing clients of Simply IC are not eligible to apply for the Simply IC Music Growth Award. This ensures that applications are assessed independently of any existing commercial relationship with Simply IC.

Judging Panel

Applications will be assessed by a panel of leading figures from the music sector.

Chloé van Soeterstède

Principal Guest Conductor with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra
Conductor and Founder, Arch Sinfonia

Jonathan Darbourne

Artistic Director & Co-Founder, Vache Baroque

Thomas Allery

Director of Music, Temple Church
Harpichordist, Ensemble Hesperis

The panel will assess eligible applications against the published criteria and identify the project or projects that demonstrate the strongest potential to use marketing to grow musical participation and create meaningful community impact.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed equally against four criteria.

Participation

Will the project help more people engage with music?

Judges will consider the number of new people the organisation expects to reach and whether the proposed activity has the potential to widen participation.

Community Impact

Will reaching these people make a meaningful difference?

Judges will consider who will benefit, whether the project addresses a genuine barrier to participation and how it could strengthen connections within the community.

Deliverability

Is there a credible plan for reaching the intended audience?

Judges will consider the organisation's capacity, marketing approach, leadership, budget and ability to successfully deliver and measure the proposed activity.

Legacy

Will the benefits continue beyond the Award period?

Judges will consider whether the project could create lasting audience relationships, improved marketing capability, stronger partnerships, useful audience knowledge or sustainable opportunities for future participation.

Key Dates

1 December 2026

Applications open.

1 February 2027 at 5.00pm

Applications close.

February 2027

Applications are reviewed by the Simply IC Marketing Growth Award judging panel and successful organisations are notified.

March 2027

Awards are announced and funding released.

July 2027 – July 2028

Award-funded activity takes place.

During the project

Recipients share progress and outcomes with Simply IC.

Within three months of completion

Recipients submit a short impact report including results, audience data, photographs and reflections.

About Simply IC

Simply IC is an audience-first marketing agency working with charities, churches and organisations across the music and arts sectors. We help organisations grow their impact through clear communication, creative thinking, audience development and meaningful engagement. We believe that marketing is about much more than promotion.

Good marketing helps organisations understand the people they want to reach. It helps remove barriers, build relationships, communicate value and create opportunities for people to become involved.

For musical organisations and programmes, that can mean a new singer joining a choir, a family attending its first concert, a young person discovering an orchestra, a church connecting its musical life with its surrounding community, or an ensemble developing an entirely new audience. When more people participate in music, communities become stronger.

The Simply IC Marketing Growth Award reflects our commitment to helping excellent musical activity reach the people and communities who could benefit from it.

For more information, please visit: www.simply-ic.co.uk/marketing-growth-award

If you would like to discuss an application, please contact:

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