
LSO
LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Head of LSO Discovery
– Recruitment Pack
London Symphony Orchestra



INTRODUCTION

Introduction from John Harte, Managing Director

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Head of LSO Discovery.

Since joining the London Symphony Orchestra as Managing Director in August, I've spent a great deal of time talking to people – musicians, staff, supporters and audience members – about what makes this Orchestra special. One of the clearest themes to emerge has been just how central Discovery is to the life of the organisation. I've been struck not just by the extraordinary impact of the programme but by the energy and commitment it inspires across the LSO, and the extent to which it generates new ideas, artistic connections and opportunities. It is one of the LSO's most precious and distinctive strengths.

LSO Discovery has developed enormously in recent years under the inspirational leadership of Stephanie Hutchinson, who has brought such clear strategic focus to the programme. Together with our musicians, staff and creative partners, she has established a remarkable legacy on which her successor will be able to build.

There is a wealth of expertise and resources that supports LSO Discovery's broad programme activity. This includes the skills and commitment of LSO Members and our animateurs as well as LSO Discovery's excellent staff team and supportive colleagues from across the organisation. Recently refurbished, LSO St Luke's is a home for many of LSO Discovery's projects, with carefully designed, flexible spaces and integrated digital infrastructure that meet the needs of the programme's participants. Strategic guidance and oversight is provided by the LSO's Board and the Discovery Advisory Committee.

Looking ahead, LSO Discovery stands poised to help shape not just the future of the LSO, but the role that orchestras can play in wider society. We face huge and urgent challenges around access to music education, social inequality, diversity and representation within our profession, and the opportunities available to young people as they move through education and into employment. At the same time, there is enormous potential to develop our work around creative health and wellbeing, talent development and new forms of artistic engagement. LSO Discovery gives us an extraordinary platform from which to explore and strive to answer these questions.

This is a senior leadership role within the LSO, and the appointment comes at an important moment as we embark on a wider strategic review of our ambitions and priorities for the years ahead. LSO Discovery will undoubtedly have a central part to play in that conversation. We are looking for someone who combines a deep appreciation of the programme's existing strengths with the imagination, ambition and curiosity to explore what more it might become.

Above all, we hope to find an inspiring and collaborative leader who will champion the work, nurture the talents and ideas of those around them, and help us realise the full potential of Discovery in the years ahead.

I very much hope you'll be excited by this opportunity, and look forward to hearing from you.

John Harte
Managing Director











ROLE OVERVIEW

The Head of LSO Discovery provides strategic, creative and organisational leadership for the LSO's extensive programme of music education, community engagement and talent development. Working closely with LSO musicians, staff, artists and partners, the appointee will build on the considerable strengths of the existing programme while identifying opportunities to develop its reach, impact and contribution to the wider artistic life of the Orchestra.

The role has responsibility for:

- Developing LSO Discovery's strategy in consultation with the Managing Director, LSO Members, animateurs and other colleagues, and translating this into an ambitious and innovative programme of activity;
- Ensuring the highest standards of artistic and educational quality, effective delivery and meaningful impact across the programme;
- Encouraging creativity, collaboration and new ideas, and strengthening connections between LSO Discovery and the Orchestra's wider artistic and strategic priorities;
- Developing and sustaining effective partnerships with organisations and individuals locally, nationally and internationally;
- Working closely with the Development department to identify fundraising priorities and secure the resources needed to support the programme;
- Leading and supporting the LSO Discovery team, with responsibility for departmental budgets, effective management and delivery.

The Head of LSO Discovery reports to the Managing Director, is a member of the LSO's senior leadership team and currently has four direct reports.



LSO DISCOVERY OVERVIEW

LSO Discovery is our world-leading learning and community programme, bringing the Orchestra and its music to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Through a year-round programme of inspiring and inclusive opportunities for performers, creators and listeners, Discovery enriches lives through the transformative power of music. Each year, it reaches around 60,000 people through nearly 1,000 workshops, performances and events, with activity spanning London, the wider UK and international partnerships, complemented by a growing range of digital resources.

LSO musicians are at the heart of the programme, sharing their skills, knowledge and experience to nurture creativity and talent, support health and wellbeing, strengthen communities and open up opportunities for people to engage with music throughout their lives.

The programme is organised around three main strands as described on the following pages along with an overview of artistic and community partnerships at LSO St Luke's which also fall under the Head of LSO Discovery's remit.



Schools & Young People

We aim to ensure all young people have access to inspirational opportunities to learn about, listen to and participate in music, instilling a life-long love for the artform. Our fun, participatory Family Concerts and Key Stage Concerts at the Barbican introduce children to music and the instruments of the orchestra. We also have an ever-growing range of digital resources available for use in the classroom or at home, and our Continuing Professional Development programme supports teachers in delivering a creative music curriculum.

Young people can get actively involved in music-making through LSO On Track, our programme of performing projects in partnership with East London Music Education Hubs, which includes the LSO East London Academy, our Youth Ambassadors Scheme and Next Generation.







Emerging Artists

Through practical guidance, mentoring and coaching, we are helping to build a future generation of musicians that reflects the society we live in. The Pathways scheme nurtures the personal and professional development of aspiring orchestral players who may have faced barriers to their progress, while our close collaboration with the Guildhall School of Music & Drama on their Orchestral Artistry programme supports Masters students seeking a career in orchestral playing. We also work with string players at the start of their career, providing opportunities to gain professional concert experience with the LSO, through the String Experience scheme.

There are major opportunities too for early-career composers through the Helen Hamlyn Panufnik Composers' Scheme, Soundhub and Jerwood Composer+ schemes, where participants are encouraged to experiment with and develop their writing for a full orchestra or chamber ensemble.







Communities, Performances & Partnerships

Through music we can enrich lives and help people connect with each other and their communities. Our musicians make visits throughout the year to hospitals, early years and adult day centres, using music to respond to health and wellbeing challenges. Further specially tailored activities include LSO Create for neurodiverse adults, their carers and supporters, where group members compose, improvise and create music together.

We work closely with community partners to deliver projects that have the greatest impact for local people, such as LSO Connect, which aims to bring live music to sometimes isolated older local residents. We also support community-led initiatives at LSO St Luke's and across the UK regions and countries we tour.

Finally, everyone is invited to discover more about music as a listener in our Free Lunchtime Concert series at LSO St Luke's, which includes specially tailored performances, particularly suitable for people more comfortable attending a concert in a relaxed environment where they are free to move around and make noise.







LSO St Luke's – Artistic and Creative Partnerships

The Head of LSO Discovery has overall oversight of the artistic programme and community partnerships at our venue, LSO St Luke's.

LSO St Luke's is the home of LSO Discovery and hosts inspiring musical groups and projects for young musicians and local residents, workshops for early-career composers and performers, and more. Following a major refurbishment in 2025, the venue has even greater capacity and potential to host the work of LSO Discovery and our partners, alongside the Orchestra's rehearsals and bookings by external organisations.

We host a range of public events for all ages at LSO St Luke's, welcoming artists from across the musical spectrum. Our vibrant programme ranges from lunchtime chamber music concerts to jazz and contemporary gigs, plus activities for families, and intriguing lectures.

Our regular collaborators include BBC Radio 3, with whom we invite world-class soloists and ensembles to perform, our LSO St Luke's Associate Artists Tangram and Ayanna Witter-Johnson, and our LSO St Luke's Community Partners Drake Music, Clerkenwell Community Choir and LSO St Luke's Community Gamelan Group.









RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategy and Programming

- Lead the development and implementation of LSO Discovery's strategy, in consultation with the Managing Director, LSO Members, animateurs and other colleagues, ensuring an ambitious, creative and innovative programme of activity.
- Work closely with LSO Members and animateurs to develop and deliver projects, encouraging creative input from the earliest stages, supporting their artistic leadership and promoting participation from musicians across the whole Orchestra.
- Encourage innovation and new ideas, identifying opportunities to develop LSO Discovery's programmes and strengthen connections with the Orchestra's wider artistic activities, audience development and strategic priorities.
- Champion inclusion and accessibility, developing opportunities for people of all backgrounds to participate in music and supporting pathways for emerging musical talent.
- Develop and nurture relationships with key individuals and organisations locally, nationally and internationally, ensuring that LSO Discovery's work responds to the needs and aspirations of participants and communities.
- Keep abreast of developments in music education, creative learning, community engagement and relevant national policies, identifying opportunities to inform and advance the LSO's work.
- Oversee the planning and delivery of LSO Discovery's activities as well as artistic and community partnerships at LSO St Luke's, working closely with the Concerts Department and venue team to ensure effective coordination.
- Ensure high standards of artistic and educational quality across the programme, overseeing evaluation and assessment of impact, and using evidence and feedback to inform future development.

Development and Advocacy

- Work closely with the Development team to identify fundraising priorities, develop proposals and engage with prospective funders and supporters.
- Maintain strong relationships with key funders and partners, ensuring that they are appropriately informed and engaged in the work they support.
- Work with Marketing and Communications colleagues to raise awareness of Discovery's activities and impact, and strengthen engagement with participants, audiences and communities.
- Represent and advocate for LSO Discovery externally, including at conferences, sector events, partnership meetings and in the media, as required.

Team Management

- Lead and manage the LSO Discovery team, providing direction, support, mentoring and professional development, and undertaking regular appraisals and performance reviews.
- Act as line manager to LSO Discovery Senior Programme Managers.
- Support Senior Programme Managers and other colleagues in developing and delivering their areas of activity, fostering a positive, inclusive and collaborative working culture within the team and across the organisation.
- Oversee the engagement of freelance artists and other personnel for LSO Discovery projects, ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place and responding to issues as necessary.
- Take a lead role in ensuring that the LSO's Safeguarding Policy is kept up to date, understood and implemented by staff, LSO Members and freelance artists.
- Act as the LSO's Designated Safeguarding Lead, ensuring appropriate safeguarding procedures, including DBS checks, are in place and operating effectively.

Finance and Reporting

- Oversee and be accountable for the department's budget, ensuring effective financial management, appropriate control of expenditure and value for money.
- Monitor Discovery's income and ensure that funders' requirements are fulfilled, working closely with the Development and Finance teams.
- Report to the LSO's Board, Discovery Advisory Committee and other relevant stakeholders, providing written reports and presentations on strategy, future plans, programme delivery and impact as required.

Other

- As a member of the senior leadership team, contribute actively to the wider management and strategic development of the LSO.
- Undertake any other reasonable duties as required.

This job description provides an outline of the role and may evolve as the role, team and LSO develop.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

- A passion for music and a strong belief in its artistic, educational and social potential, together with the ambition to develop the future of LSO Discovery.
- Significant experience of leading substantial programmes of music education, creative learning, participation, community engagement or talent development, at a senior level in an arts, cultural or related organisation.
- Strong creative and strategic thinking, with a track record of developing new ideas, translating them into successful programmes and leading positive change.
- A sound understanding of music education and participation, including current developments in formal and informal settings, and a commitment to the highest standards of artistic and educational quality.
- A strong understanding and appreciation of orchestral music, and the ability to work effectively with professional musicians, animateurs and other creative practitioners, supporting and empowering their artistic leadership.
- Proven experience of leading, motivating and developing teams, fostering a positive and collaborative working culture and working effectively with colleagues across different disciplines.
- A demonstrable commitment to diversity, inclusion and widening access to music, with an understanding of the barriers that can prevent people from participating and progressing.
- Substantial experience of managing complex programmes, projects and budgets, with strong organisational skills, sound judgement and the ability to balance competing priorities.
- The ability to develop and sustain effective partnerships with a wide range of organisations and stakeholders, and to contribute to fundraising and the development of relationships with supporters.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to inspire confidence, build relationships and represent the organisation effectively to a wide range of audiences.
- An understanding of the opportunities offered by digital technology to extend the reach, accessibility and impact of music education and participation.
- A clear understanding of the importance of safeguarding, with the ability and willingness to fulfil the responsibilities of the LSO's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Desirable

- Experience of working within a professional orchestra or other similar musician-led organisation.
- Experience of developing innovative programmes in areas such as creative health and wellbeing, emerging talent development, digital engagement and/or international partnerships.
- Experience of developing successful funding proposals and working directly with donors, trusts and other supporters.
- Previous experience of holding designated safeguarding responsibilities.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Reporting to
Managing Director

Role Duration
Permanent

Location
Based at the Barbican Centre

Hours
37.5 hours per week.

Salary
£70,000 - £80,000 according to experience

Benefits

- 25 days annual leave, plus bank holidays.
- Interest-free loan for a season travel ticket.
- Membership of company pension scheme with enhanced contributions in line with scheme rules.
- Cycle-to-Work scheme.
- Employee Assistance programme.
- Free tickets to LSO concerts at the Barbican and Lunchtime Concerts at LSO St Luke's (subject to availability).
- Private Medical Insurance for self and option to add family members
- Group Income Protection Scheme



HOW TO APPLY

If you would like to apply for this role, please visit the **LSO Careers** page, where you will be asked to complete our application form and provide your CV. If you are unable to complete the application form, please contact Oli McGinnes (**oli.mcginnes@lso.co.uk**) for assistance.

Application deadline: **9am Monday 30th November 2026**

Interviews will be held in person in central London on the following dates:

First round – Monday 7th December
Second round – Monday 14th December

Please indicate in the application form if you anticipate not being available on any of these dates, so that we can explore alternatives if you are shortlisted for interview.

If you have any questions about the role, please contact Nicky Levy, Head of HR by email at **nicky.levy@lso.co.uk**



DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

At the London Symphony Orchestra, we are committed to sharing world-leading music-making with everyone, and to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in everything that we do.

By embodying and supporting these values, our work becomes stronger through innovation, new ideas and different perspectives, and the widest range of people are able to share in, benefit from, and contribute to it. We believe in creating an inclusive organisational culture, which values and celebrates difference, and we recognise the role and responsibility that we have in the sector to champion diversity, equity and inclusion, and to set an example in this area.

As an **Equal Opportunities Employer**, the LSO is committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and does not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership.

We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join the LSO.

As a **Disability Confident Employer**, the LSO is committed to making the recruitment process as accessible as possible. If you require any reasonable adjustments during the process, please contact people@lso.co.uk.

For more information on DEI at the LSO, please see lso.co.uk/policies

disability confident COMMITTED

GOVERNANCE AND STAFF TEAM

The London Symphony Orchestra is a self-governing orchestra and a registered charity. Its players are Members and shareholders of London Symphony Orchestra Ltd, giving them a direct voice in the organisation's artistic and strategic direction.

The LSO is governed by a Board of Directors comprising elected player representatives, external non-playing directors and the Managing Director. The Board delegates responsibility for orchestral matters to the Orchestra Committee and financial oversight to the Finance Committee, while the day-to-day operation of the organisation is led by the Managing Director and staff team.

The LSO's wider activities include LSO St Luke's, LSO Discovery and its record label, LSO Live, which operate through wholly owned subsidiary companies with their own boards.

Find out more
lso.co.uk/about-us





After You Have Submitted Your Application
After submitting the online form, you will receive an acknowledgement email. Additionally, you will be asked to complete an anonymous equal opportunities form for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion monitoring purposes. Though this is not compulsory, we encourage you to fill it out as this helps the LSO continue to improve on its recruitment process.

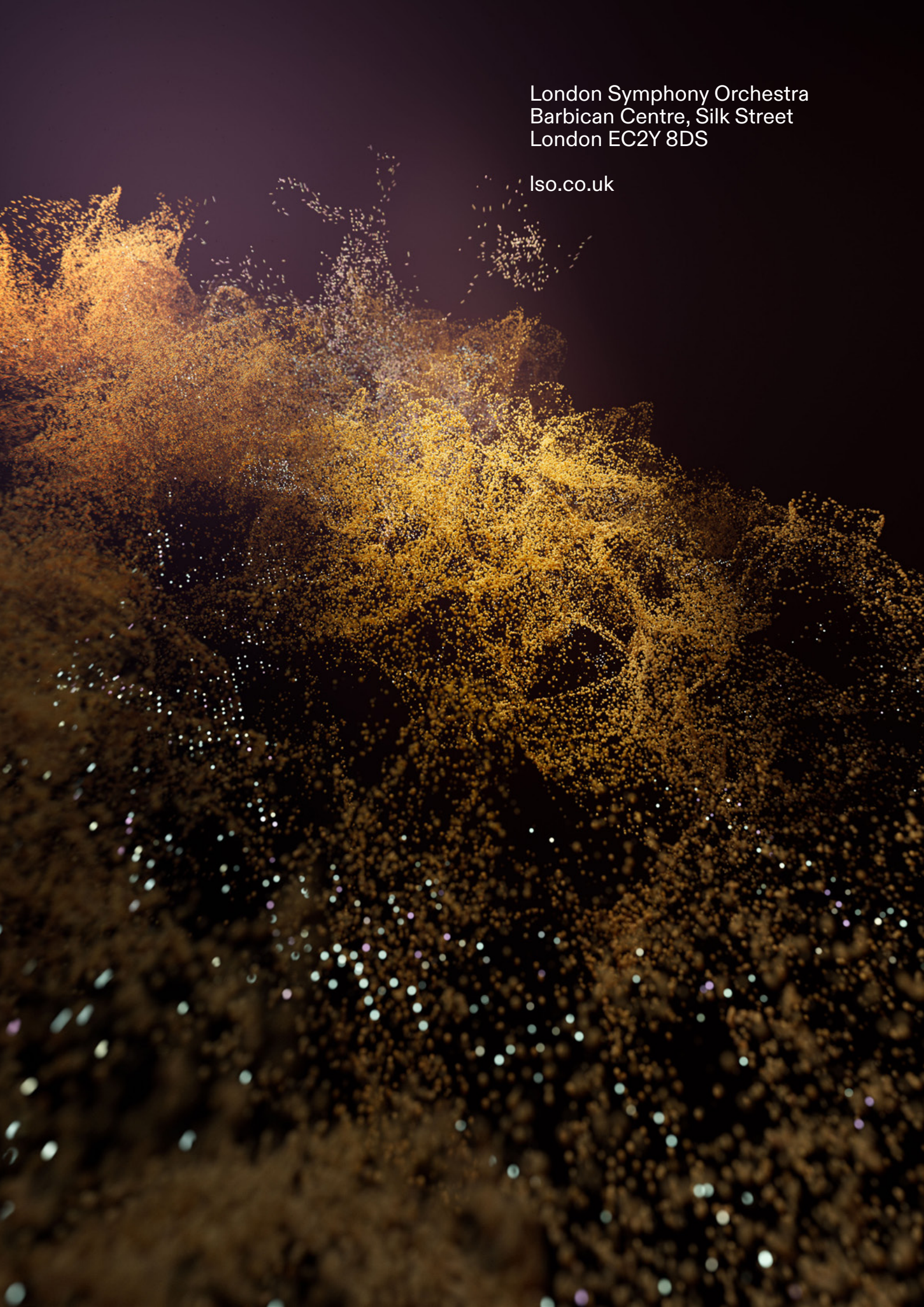
When You Will Hear Back
Shortlisting applicants usually occurs within two weeks of the application closing deadline. Though we aspire to contact unsuccessful applicants, on some occasions with a higher volume of applicants, this may not be possible. If you have not heard from us within two weeks of the closing date, then you have not been shortlisted.

AI in Job Applications
The LSO recognises that AI tools can help candidates prepare their applications. AI should be used to support your own knowledge, not replace it. You remain responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of everything you submit.

Any AI-assisted content should be carefully reviewed and edited so that your application remains a genuine representation of you.

How long will my application be kept for?
Applications are kept for a maximum of 12 months. If you would prefer us to not keep your information for this period of time, please email us at people@lso.co.uk and your information will be deleted sooner.

More Information
For more information about the London Symphony Orchestra or recruitment at the LSO, please visit our website lso.co.uk or email people@lso.co.uk or follow us on LinkedIn.



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