

A photograph of a youth orchestra performing, with a central black circle containing the logo. The background shows several young musicians in light purple shirts and dark trousers, playing violins and holding sheet music. The lighting is warm and focused on the performers.

# IYOB

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA BRIDGES

*Expanding horizons in  
music & beyond*

# IYOB

## What is the International Youth Orchestra Bridges project?

The IYOB project is a collaboration between the West Coast Youth Orchestra (South Africa) and the Waverley Ensemble (UK). It will bring together young musicians from the UK and South Africa, aged between 13 and 17, to form an international orchestra. The musicians will rehearse in their own countries and/or online, before coming together in South Africa in July 2024, to perform at venues in Cape Town, Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg.



**Patron** - Pieter Schoeman, leader of the London Philharmonic Orchestra



The West Coast Youth Orchestra® is an established South African youth orchestra for musicians from all backgrounds, empowering the youths of the West Coast communities with musical knowledge, imagination and a love of music. Currently it has six interlocking music education, development and performing programmes running throughout the year. It organised an international orchestra tour in 2017 with great success.



## THE WAVERLEY ENSEMBLE

The Waverley Ensemble is a Surrey-based community project founded by Ishani Bhoola. It was created to bring high quality baroque music, performed by professional musicians in the area, to the local community. In addition to performing great music, a core element of the venture is to bring the local community together through a shared love of classical music. Ishani launched the Haslemere International String Competition in 2017. The winner from the 2023 competition will be invited to perform a solo piece on the IYOB tour.

# What are the aims of the IYOB project?

## 01

**To encourage young people from all backgrounds, especially disadvantaged backgrounds, to pursue music seriously.**

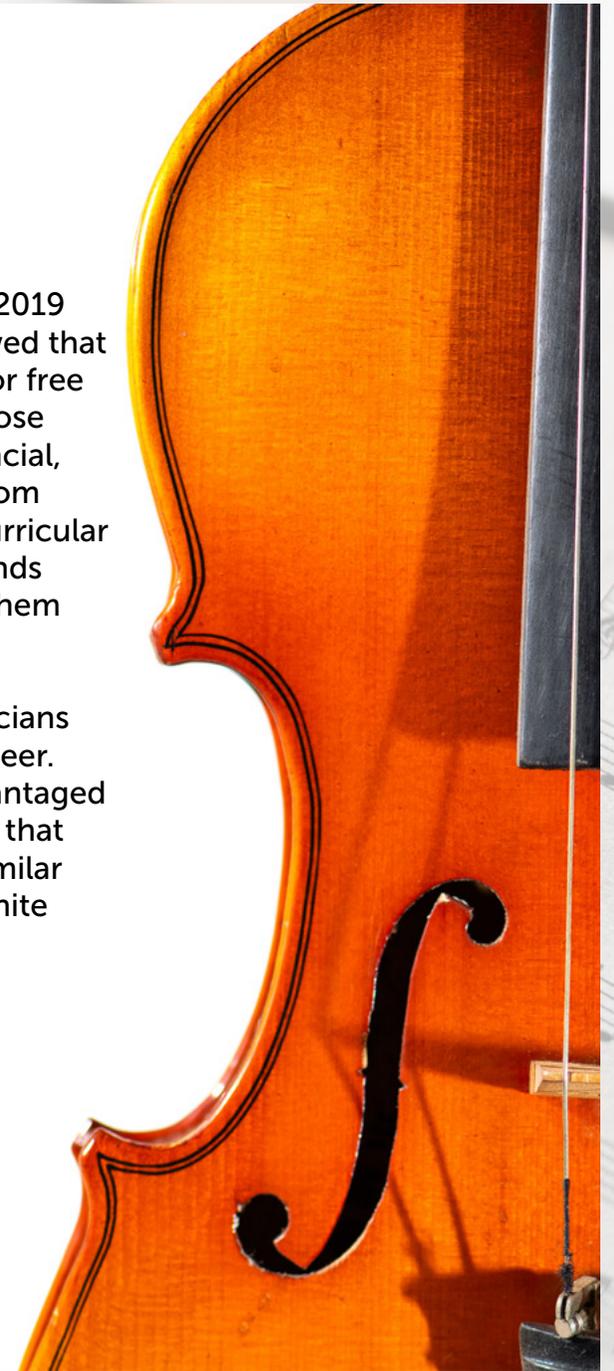
In the UK, income is a barrier to learning to play a musical instrument. A 2019 study by the University of Bath and the Social Mobility Commission showed that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (i.e. those who qualify for free school meals) are three times less likely to take up music lessons than those from advantaged backgrounds. While the reasons for this are partly financial, another significant barrier the report identified was that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds perceive that they will not “fit in” at extra-curricular activities. By bringing together young people from a variety of backgrounds in an orchestra, we aim to break down this perception. We aim to unite them through a love of music and the energy of group performance.

We hope that IYOB will ultimately encourage disadvantaged young musicians to apply to music colleges and look to professional musicianship as a career. Looking ahead, we hope that successful classical musicians from disadvantaged backgrounds will inspire the next generation, consolidating the message that music is for everyone, regardless of income. We perceive there will be similar benefits for the children participating from South Africa and we aim to unite them all through a love of music and the energy of group performance.

## 02

**To build young musicians' confidence and healthy self-discipline through rehearsing and performing, building an essential life skill to support any career.**

The 2019 study also identified that young people acquire life skills through learning and performing music. These include confidence and social skills. IYOB hopes to equip the next generation by teaching and nurturing essential workplace skills.



# 03

## To encourage social mobility.

A 2020 poll by the Social Mobility Commission found that social mobility is declining in the UK, and there is a broad perception that the notion of class is entrenched and there are few prospects for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. We hope IYOB will address some of these negative perceptions and encourage social mobility among the participants.

# 04

## To give young people from the UK an opportunity to travel to a country they might not otherwise visit.

IYOB is a great opportunity for young people to visit South Africa. For British children who have not travelled abroad before, South Africa offers the reassurance of a familiar language, as well as a chance to experience a different country. The UK Department for Education encourages teachers to offer a "broad and balanced" curriculum. IYOB would support this approach by combining music with travel and a broader cultural awareness.

For young people who choose music for a career, feeling confident about international travel is an essential skill. 30% of jobs in orchestral music require foreign travel and we hope to prepare them for this added challenge.

Finally, music is an international language that enables participants to connect meaningfully across boundaries and cultures. The children participating will learn to build relationships with others from a myriad of different backgrounds.



# How will we achieve these aims?

**How will we encourage young people from all backgrounds, especially disadvantaged backgrounds, to pursue music seriously?** The IYOB project will be a fun, engaging, creative experience for all the young people involved. It will give them insight into the world of the professional musician, and show them an additional level on which to experience music, through playing with new people in a different country.

We are already in contact with Cathy Scott Burt who leads an orchestra in Coventry. X% of the Coventry orchestra are from disadvantaged backgrounds and have expressed interest in the project.

To ensure that we help the young people most in need, we have created a flyer to share with secondary schools with above-average numbers of children receiving free school meals. The national average is currently 20.8%.

In the UK, the Waverley Ensemble

has a proven track record of bringing high-quality classical music to a diverse audience. We would draw on this experience to reach out to diverse young musicians for the IYOB project.

If our funding bid is successful, we will use the funding to pay for flights to South Africa, transport, accommodation, instrument hire, venue hire and, if necessary, travel essentials like suitcases and extra clothes. This will make the project accessible to young musicians from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**How will we build young musicians' confidence and healthy self-discipline through rehearsing and performing, building an essential life skill to support any career?**

We believe in working with young people's strengths to help them become great performers with self-confidence. From our experience as orchestra directors, we know that positive encouragement is the key to success, and we will be following this principle in IYOB.

In 2017, the WCYO® trip to Bratislava transformed the lives of two orchestras (Junior and Senior), in particular two double-bass players. By that time, they were at a novice





level and were very motivated thereafter. They started to become serious about their music and now they are preparing to start their music studies after school, with major in double bass. Their dreams are to become well-known double bass players in Europe one day, as they have seen Europe and performed in four countries with WCYO®.

By bringing young people from different backgrounds and nationalities together, we will encourage good social skills and nurture the ability to work alongside others, regardless of background or nationality. This is an essential workplace skill in music or any other industry.

**How will we encourage social mobility?** A long-term goal of the project is social mobility. We hope to see a similar success story to the WCYO trip. The trip will be well-run and enjoyable, because we have experience of running international music trips. The enjoyment should inspire the young people to increase their advantage in life.

We will encourage participants to aim high and maintain high expectations of themselves. Through international travel, we hope to show

them a different view of the world. We will gently introduce the idea that there are possibilities beyond the life they usually experience, generating ambition and balancing it with respect for others.

**How will we give young people from the UK an opportunity to travel to a country they might not otherwise visit?** The project is a partnership between the Waverley Ensemble and the West Coast Youth Orchestra in South Africa. The WCYO director, Carina Brown, is using her contacts to source accommodation and transport around the country.

We undertake to support families to provide passports and visas and any other documentation required for travel.

The orchestra will be travelling around South Africa by air and by bus. This will provide the young musicians with the opportunity to experience the country and its culture first hand, as well as visiting the performance venues.

By showing young musicians that foreign travel can be well-organised and run smoothly, we will inspire confidence in them to travel in future, and not be afraid to pursue careers that require foreign travel.

# YOUB

**The overall cost will be approximately £75,000**

International flights | Domestic travel in the UK and South Africa  
Insurance | Visas | Accommodation | Adult supervision  
Instrument hire | Venue hire | Food and catering

- Day 1** Arrive in Cape Town, go to West Coast School
- Day 2** Rehearsal
- Day 3** Travel to Cape Town for rehearsal and concert
- Day 4** Day off, visit table mountain
- Day 5** Fly to Durban, drive to Pietermaritzburg
- Day 6** Concert Pietermaritzburg
- Day 7** Bus to Johannesburg
- Day 8** Workshop/concert in Soweto
- Day 9** Concert in Johannesburg
- Day 10** Flight back to UK



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