



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

Choral Commission - Unity Voices

Call for submissions from composers in the LGBTQI+ community in Ireland
(This project is supported by the [LGBTI+ Community Services Funding Call 2023](#))

Sing Ireland, the national body for the support, development and promotion of all forms of group singing, is committed to providing an environment that is inclusive and supportive of all. Through its work with the Irish Youth Choirs, Sing Ireland has worked with a large number of singers in Ireland who represent the LGBTQI+ community. In 2023, Sing Ireland was awarded funding from the [Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth](#) for a project entitled 'Unity Voices'. This initiative seeks to commission a composer from the LGBTQI+ community to write a new choral work for the Irish Youth Choirs (the Irish Youth Choir and the Irish Youth Training Choir). The composition will be performed in July 2024 in the Irish Youth Choir's Summer concerts and will celebrate inclusion, diversity and belonging in choral music in Ireland.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project, Unity Voices, will include workshops with the Irish Youth Choirs' (IYCs) members and the wider choral community to explore the inclusive nature of choral singing in Ireland, to highlight the possibilities for connection and belonging within the choral community and to give voice to the ideas of the young people that work with the IYCs and Sing Ireland. This work will seek to develop the foundations of understanding for greater inclusion in choral music - using terminology like upper and lower voices, and Soprano/ Alto/ Tenor/ Bass instead of girls and boys, male and female. The culmination of the project will be the performance of a new commission by an Irish

composer within the LGBTQI+ community, that embodies the experiences and ideas of the choir members.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the Irish Youth Choirs

The Irish Youth Choir is the only dedicated national youth choir that offers training opportunities for conductors and singers from all over Ireland. Set up as a choir in 1982, IYC now consists of two choirs; the Irish Youth Choir for 18-28 year olds and the Irish Youth Training Choir for 14-17 year olds.

The Irish Youth Choir meets in July for an intensive summer residential course under the expert tuition of the Artistic Director, Bernie Sherlock, and a team of tutors and vocal coaches. The week culminates in a number of performances by the choir. The Irish Youth Training Choir, conducted by Patrick Barrett, meets for their summer residential course in June each year.

In July 2024, the Irish Youth Training Choir and the Irish Youth Choir will premier this new commission together.

About Sing Ireland

Sing Ireland is the national body for the support, development and promotion of all forms of group singing. In leading, supporting, and connecting communities of singers in Ireland, Sing Ireland is on a mission to enhance lives through singing and build stronger voices throughout Irish communities.

Sing Ireland is an organisation that changed its name to become their vision - a vision of a SINGing Ireland, a nation fully immersed in quality group singing experiences. People living on the island of Ireland will value, recognise and experience the life changing ability that singing has to impact on their health, creativity, and well-being.

Inclusion and diversity is at the heart of Sing Ireland's work as it strives to ensure that its work reaches people of all ages and varying backgrounds, abilities, ethnicities and identities. Sing Ireland is on a journey of transforming youth singing development in

Ireland, making a truly meaningful impact on the number of young people that are engaging with the YouthSing Ireland programme in primary schools as well as Ireland's National Youth Choirs. Sing Ireland is actualising a more vibrant, diverse and active singing sector through its membership, training and initiatives such as National Singing Week. Through programmes such as Ageing Voices and Song Seeking in direct provision, Sing Ireland strives to achieve equity in access to group singing for those in marginalised communities.

THE COMMISSION

- The commission is open to an Irish Composer from the LGBTQI+ community, with experience writing for choirs.
- The resulting work will be premiered by the Irish Youth Choirs in July 2024 and should consider the singers, aged between 14 and 28 years old, within the process.
- Contact and consultation with Sing Ireland, the Artistic Director of the IYCs and the Conductor of the IYTC will be an important element of the commission.
- The work must reflect the ideas put forward by the IYCs singers. The chosen composer will be expected to attend two zoom calls in late February 2024 to meet and discuss the project with the singers from both choirs.
- A central objective of this commission is to reflect the sense of belonging, equality and inclusion that exists within the IYCs and the choral sector for young people in Ireland.
- It is envisaged that the work will be between **3 - 5 minutes duration** and suitable for the IYCs. It may be a cappella or include piano accompaniment.

THE COMMISSIONING PROCESS

The selection process for the commissioned works will be made by a panel, based on the proposal supplied by the applicant. Candidates may be invited to discuss their proposal in person with the selection panel but may also be selected based on their proposal.

The rate of remuneration will be in line with the [CMC guidelines](#).

PROPOSALS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

- An outline of the proposed musical ideas for this original choral composition (Max 300 words.)
- An up-to-date C.V. - Please outline relevant experience composing for choirs. This may include information relating to any choral or group singing experience and/or compositions for choirs or singing groups would be an advantage.
- Selection of examples of recent choral work - a maximum of 3 audio files/links and 3 score excerpts (PDFs and audio files).
- Applicants are invited to submit proposed texts or subject matter with their application.

SELECTION DETAILS

The selection panel will consist of representatives from Sing Ireland, the IYCs Artistic team, and at least one external expert. All proposals will be assessed and a shortlist will be formed. The commissioners shall not be liable for any costs or expenses in respect of applications. Please note that the commissioners reserve the right not to commission from entries received and to re-invite, directly commission, or to select more than one submission for commission and to divide the budget accordingly.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Artistic merit
- Relevance to the projection and a focus on inclusion and equality in Irish choral music for the LGBTQI+ community
- Clarity and practicality of proposal
- Demonstrated ability to carry out the project as per the proposed timeline

TIMELINE

- Deadline for application: Sunday, 11 February 2024
- Selection process: 12-18 February 2024
- Notification of outcome: 19 February 2024
- Zoom call with Artistic Team and IYC singers: 19-29 February 2024
- Zoom call in March and May 2024 with the Artistic Director of the IYCs on the commission
- Deadline for submission of the composition: 1 June 2024
- Performance dates: 11 July 2024 in Limerick and 13 July 2024 in Dublin

SUBMISSION DETAILS

- Please email proposals to recruitment@singireland.ie by Sunday, 11 February 2024.
- Please put the following in the subject heading of your email submission: **IYCs LGBTQI+ Commission 2024.**
- Please make sure all submitted material is clearly marked with the artist's name and contact details.
- Submissions will only be accepted by email.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Applicants may contact Jenny O'Connor-Madsen (General Manager) via email at jenny@singireland.ie or info@singireland.ie.