

NATIONAL ORCHESTRAL TRAINING PATHWAYS

REPORT TO THE AUSTRALIA COUNCIL

FROM JENNY COOK

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report draws upon a series of interviews conducted with stakeholders identified in Appendix 1 who contributed generously to the dialogue regarding orchestral training. The author wishes to thank them for the high degree of interest, enthusiasm and care they demonstrated in providing responses.

The report also draws significantly on preliminary interviews, research and analysis undertaken by Trish Ludgate from The Australia Council earlier in 2008 that resulted in a preliminary internal report to the Council and was the catalyst for the commissioning of this independent report.

Other key references have been a series of papers and a thesis by Dr Dawn Bennett from Curtin University of Technology and a published case study into the Sinfonia and Fellowship Programs at Sydney Symphony prepared by Mary C. Johnsson and Paul Hager from the University of Technology, Sydney.

Finally, the author wishes to acknowledge Tony Grybowski, Trish Ludgate and Bronwyn Lobb from The Australia Council for their invaluable support and patience throughout the preparation of this report, which was greatly appreciated.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines training pathways for the development of orchestral musicians for the professional orchestral sector, identifies key issues and gaps, and recommends approaches to strengthen the future coordination and effectiveness of training at these levels for the sector in Australia. The scope of the report is pre-professional training opportunities and pathways, with contextual reference to training at the advanced level.

KEY FINDINGS

Training Pathways

- The training pathways available to Australian orchestral musicians are fragmented and lack a plan to shape training content and outcomes at key stages of development, from preparatory to advanced to pre-professional levels
- There is a longstanding absence of collaboration among key institutions between and within key stages of development that has served to undermine the effectiveness of training
- Australian musicians who successfully enter the professional sector typically pursue a pathway that includes AYO programs, an undergraduate qualification in music performance, likely postgraduate qualification, advanced postgraduate studies, participation in a pre-professional program and casual or contract employment with professional orchestras

Pre-Professional Programs

- Current pre-professional programs are of high quality but variable in relation to length, depth and accessibility, both geographic and in relation to the type of instrumentalist
- Total expenditure on these programs was \$1.95m in 2008, funded through a combination of government, sponsorship, philanthropic and earned income, including \$815,000 in sponsorship and philanthropy
- A number of pre-professional programs have been highly successful as a stepping stone to professional orchestral careers, particularly Sydney Sinfonia and the various Orchestral Fellowships

Training Issues & Gaps

- There is currently poor alignment of market supply and demand in relation to high quality orchestral musicians. Of the 652 permanent positions within Australia's professional orchestras in 2008, 35 are vacant and a further 4 are 'frozen'. This year there were around 100 participants in Australian pre-professional programs alone and estimated 100 or so B. Music graduates in performance (instrumental)
- Key training issues include the lack of strategic planning and collaboration; unclear training roles and responsibilities; limited national program reach and infrastructure; variable quality of tertiary music training and limited vocational training available at advanced and pre-professional levels
- Key training gaps at the pre-professional level include audition readiness, experience performing large-scale orchestral repertoire under professional conditions, other aspects of career readiness, training for leadership positions in orchestras and mentoring capability and culture within the professional orchestras
- The new Australian National Academy of Music in Melbourne has an unclear role, focus or plan, and represents \$2.5m in annual government investment towards the training of professional musicians

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Pre-Professional & Advanced Programs

1. Influence the role and positioning of the new Australian National Academy of Music to ensure that it delivers elite orchestral musicians for the Australian marketplace, informed through high level advice, consultation and partnerships with the professional orchestral sector
2. Create a National Fellowships Scheme as a 1 to 2 year program, offered through all the professional symphony and pit orchestras, with travelling Fellowships or placements to orchestras in the smaller States
3. Strengthen Sydney Sinfonia's position as a National Sinfonia, increasing subsidy for interstate musicians
4. Retain ACO2 and extend the number of emerging artists and program in line with its Business Plan
5. Offer audition preparation as a major component of all pre-professional programs for orchestral musicians
6. Offer targeted professional workshops and seminars nationally to improve audition and career readiness, in collaboration with the professional orchestras and tertiary institutions, incorporating accreditation, where possible, for programs delivered by the professional orchestral sector

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy, Policy, Planning & Collaboration

7. Formalise Symphony Services Australia's brief and priority to include national coordination of policy, strategy development and advocacy for training of orchestral musicians at the pre-professional level
8. Host an annual or biennial roundtable meeting between the professional orchestras, key tertiary music institutions, ANAM and AYO to define training needs, priorities and outcomes for musicians at key stages of development and identify the respective roles and responsibilities of key institutions
9. Ensure all pre-professional and advanced programs have clearly defined training objectives and targets, supported by a structured program of profiling, tracking and evaluation to ensure high quality data and feedback that informs future training directions and priorities

Funding Model & Agreements

10. Seek clarity from the Australian Government regarding expectations for the delivery and funding of pre-professional programs for orchestral musicians. Ensure that the future funding model incorporates a clear and sustainable funding mix for these programs
11. Incorporate artist development objectives, resourcing and targets in relation to the training of orchestral musicians in future funding agreements with government and in SSA agreements with the orchestras

Other Recommendations

12. Manage musicians expectations at all key stages regarding their career options and training choices
13. Review and address selection and audition processes and cultural barriers to the appointment of talented young Australian musicians to the professional orchestras
14. Create role statements for orchestral musicians that outline the required profile of musicians (skills, experience and attributes), scope and mix of duties and responsibilities, and performance management processes
15. Research and identify future employment models and options that reflect the mutual needs and priorities of the professional orchestras and orchestral musicians
16. Strengthen induction and performance management processes within the professional orchestras to ensure appropriate professional support mechanisms, including during trial processes and first year of appointment
17. Continue implementation of the loss of proficiency provisions to ensure the continued artistic vibrancy and renewal for the professional orchestras and periodic access to vacancies for pre-professional musicians
18. Strengthen national marketing and communication of orchestral training opportunities, pathways and outcomes, including successful placements into the professional orchestral sector

The brief for this consultancy included an acknowledgement that recommendations should be developed without an assumption that additional funding would be available to implement any recommendations. Accordingly, the majority of the aforementioned recommendations can be implemented at low cost to the orchestral sector or government and in the short to medium term. The key recommendation requiring additional resources, and the one believed to offer maximum new benefit to the sector, is the introduction of a National Fellowships Scheme.

Whilst each recommendation is graded as no, low, medium or high cost, there has been no specific scoping of cost or other modelling of impact as part of this brief, which would need to be undertaken as a subsequent phase of work, following a formal response from the orchestral sector to the report and identification of priorities.

It is believed that the approaches recommended would deliver significant improvement to the future coordination and effectiveness of training for orchestral musicians at the pre-professional level and are worthy of serious consideration by the professional orchestral sector and government.

APPENDIX 1. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

THE AUSTRALIA COUNCIL

Tony Grybowski – Executive Director - Major Performing Arts Board
Kate Lidbetter – Director - Music Board
Trish Ludgate – Program and Research Officer - Major Performing Arts Board
Bronwyn Lobb – Project and Administration Officer - Major Performing Arts Board

SYMPHONY SERVICES AUSTRALIA

Dilek Henderson – Acting Chief Executive (until 16 Nov 2008)
Kate Lidbetter – Chief Executive (from 17 Nov 2008)

ORCHESTRAS

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Rainer Jozeps – Chief Executive
Jim Koehne – Manager - Artistic Planning

Australian Chamber Orchestra

Damien Low – Director of Operations

Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra

Vernon Windley – Director of Human Resources and Orchestral Services
Victoria Grant – Acting Orchestra Manager

Canberra Symphony Orchestra

Henry Laska – General Manager

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Trevor Green – Managing Director
Huw Humphreys – Director of Artistic Planning
Lou Oppenheim – Director of Operations

Orchestra Victoria

Jo Beaumont – Artistic Director and Concertmaster

Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Libby Christie – Managing Director
Peter Czornyj – Director of Artistic Planning
Margaret Moore – Education Manager
Bernadette Heard – Artist Development Manager
Roger Benedict – Artistic Director, Sydney Symphony Fellowships
Richard Gill – Artistic Director, Sydney Sinfonia

Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

Nicholas Heyward – Managing Director
Simon Rogers – Manager - Artistic Planning
Kate Salvatore – Orchestra Manager

The Queensland Orchestra

Matthew Farrell – Director – Orchestra Management

West Australian Symphony Orchestra

Keith Venning – Chief Executive Officer
Craig Whitehead – Chief Executive Officer Elect
Marshall McGuire – Executive Manager – Artistic Planning

APPENDIX 1. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

KEY MUSIC TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Australian National Academy of Music

Robert (Bob) Clarke – Managing Director
Nick Bailey – Artist Manager

Australian Youth Orchestra

Colin Cornish – Chief Executive Officer

TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS & CONSERVATORIUMS

Elder Conservatorium of Music

Keith Crellin – Head of Strings

Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Griffith University

Professor Peter Roennfeldt - Director

Sydney Conservatorium of Music

Professor Imre Pallo – Pro-Dean & Chair/ Professor in Conducting

The University of Melbourne

Professor Catherine (Cathy) Falk – Dean of Music

The University of Tasmania Conservatorium of Music

Dr Andrew Legg – Interim Director

The University of Western Australia School of Music

Peter Moore – Coordinator of Winds

Victorian College of the Arts

Marco Van-Pagee – Head of Orchestral Studies

YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

Youth Orchestras Australia Network (by email)

Adelaide Youth Orchestra, Canberra Youth Music, Centre for Youth Music at Charles Darwin University

Melbourne Youth Music, Queensland Youth Orchestra, Sydney Youth Orchestra (no response)

Tasmanian Youth Orchestra, WA Youth Music Association

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

SOMA

Simon Collins – MSO

Tania Hardy-Smith – Orchestra Victoria

Howard Manley

Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Timothy Calnin – Chief Executive

RESEARCHERS, CONSULTANTS & OTHER INDIVIDUALS

Dr. Dawn Bennett – Research Academic, Curtin University, Perth

David Garrett

Peter Grant – also AYO Board Director, Consultant, ANAM Review

Mary C. Johnsson – Research Associate and PhD student & Professor Paul Hager – Professor of Education, University of Technology, Sydney

Dr Richard Mills AM – also Artistic Director, West Australian Opera

Fabian Russell – also Artistic Director, Melbourne Youth Music

APPENDIX 2. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ORCHESTRAS

ACO	Australian Chamber Orchestra
AOBO	Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra
ASO	Adelaide Symphony Orchestra
CSO	Canberra Symphony Orchestra
MSO	Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
OV	Orchestra Victoria
SSO	Sydney Symphony
TQO	The Queensland Orchestra
TSO	Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra
WASO	West Australian Symphony Orchestra

TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

ANAM	Australian National Academy of Music
AYO	Australian Youth Orchestra

UNIVERSITIES & CONSERVATORIUMS

QCGU	Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University
UTAS	The University of Tasmania
VCA	Victorian College of the Arts

STATES

NSW	New South Wales
QLD	Queensland
SA	South Australia
TAS	Tasmania
VIC	Victoria
WA	Western Australia