



**Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures
School of Music**

PhD Studentship Award – “Opera North Education – exploring and measuring engagement, experience and impact”

The University of Leeds School of Music and Opera North Education are pleased to announce a PhD Studentship which consolidates a strong partnership between the two organisations. The studentship aims to explore the impact of Opera North Education’s work on the range of young people, families, and communities who participate in their projects. The work will focus primarily on their *In Harmony* projects (see more below). The studentship covers full fees and subsistence and is to commence no later than 1 October 2017.

Subject Area

The successful applicant will ideally have a first degree in music as well as experience of arts education (from the perspective of practice or research) and some previous experience of empirical research methods. Broader interest in sociology or psychology as applied to music will also be an advantage. Applications from candidates with backgrounds in Psychology, Sociology, Education and potentially other disciplines are also welcomed provided they demonstrate relevant music expertise and experience.

Candidates are invited to submit a research proposal that addresses the opportunities and challenges associated with evaluating the value and impact of arts education projects – using the *In Harmony* projects run by Opera North Education as the focus for the activity. Informal enquiries regarding the topic area may be directed to Dr Karen Burland (k.burland@leeds.ac.uk).

Background

In Harmony is a national initiative that aims to inspire and enhance the lives of children, their families and wider communities through school and community-based ensemble and orchestral music-making. The programme, funded by the Department for Education and Arts Council England, has on-going projects in Lambeth and Liverpool, Newcastle and Gateshead, Nottingham, and Telford and Stoke in addition to In Harmony Opera North. In Harmony Opera North has been running since 2013 in south Leeds and now works in 3 primary schools and with over 1,100 children every week. All of the children with In Harmony Opera North take part in regular music making activities, both within curriculum time and as extra-curricular activities. All Year 2-6 pupils play in an orchestra every week and receive their own instrument; all children participate in weekly singing activities; the overall programme design develops musicianship skills.

Children and young people are central to the Opera North’s ambition and purpose, particularly amongst communities with the greatest need – socially and economically – where research demonstrates that the wellbeing of young people and families can be enhanced through inspirational cultural projects. In Harmony Opera North seeks to deliver an inclusive programme of high quality music education and performance opportunities in order to encourage young people

from all backgrounds to engage with the arts and, through doing so, benefit from a range of wider outcomes.

In Harmony Opera North is the first In Harmony project in Yorkshire, the only one nationally that is delivered by an opera company, and includes a focus on singing and the other elements that make up the operatic art form as well as instrument playing. The programme aims to raise aspirations, increase expectations, and use group music making as a way of developing the following skills and attributes in its participants: communication (namely listening, teamwork and respect), confidence and self-worth, creative problem solving, adaptability and perseverance.

'The In Harmony programme continues to be an essential ingredient in ensuring the future success of our pupils. It continues to define our identity and ethos, and enriches the social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of our curriculum in a way that no other project can match. It has brought communities together and acts as the unifying thread in the tapestry of our ongoing achievements. Levels of parental engagement have soared over the term of the project and relationships across our school communities are fantastic. My pupils exude pride and passion for the In Harmony programme. Long may it continue to change lives for the better.'

Andy Gamble, Executive Headteacher, Low Road and Windmill Music Federation

Supervision

The student's principal supervisor will be Dr Karen Burland with Dr Freya Bailes as co-supervisor. Supervision will also be provided by Charlotte Taylor (In Harmony Manager) from Opera North Education. Dr Burland has been working with Opera North Education for the past two years to evaluate the impact of their work, and it is the data she has collected which underpin the current studentship. Dr Burland also has research interests in musical identities, the value of musical participation, and the impact of transitions on individuals' musical lives.

Dr Bailes is a music psychologist with experience supervising doctoral research into the pro-social benefits of musical engagement. She has particular research interests in understanding and evaluating relationships between music and wellbeing.

Charlotte Taylor oversees the vision and implementation of the In Harmony Opera North programme and manages the project management and teaching teams that deliver the work both in Leeds and, from September 2017, in Hull.

Research Environment

The student will work closely with Opera North Education and will have access to the range of projects they organise throughout the period of the studentship (indicative examples can be found here: <https://www.operanorth.co.uk/education-and-engagement>). In addition, the student will have access to the facilities of the University of Leeds, including the excellent Brotherton Library, the new Laidlaw Library and the University's comprehensive on-line resources. S/he will join a thriving community of around 50 music research students and will have the usual support offered to research students in the School of Music, as well as opportunities to take training and development courses for research postgraduate students in the Arts offered by the University's Organisational Development and Professional Learning unit, the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures, and the School of Music. The student will have access to a working area in the School of

Music's Postgraduate Students' Research Studio, and will have opportunities to contribute to and participate in research seminars, conferences and study days run by the School.

Requirements

Applicants must have a good first degree in an appropriate subject, and normally a Master's degree or other professional experience relevant to the scope of the project.

Applications should be made via the University's online application system at http://www.leeds.ac.uk/rsa/prospective_students/apply/i_want_to_apply.html. When asked for information about the area of research, applicants should state clearly that they are applying for the Opera North Education PhD Studentship in Music. A research proposal must be submitted, that clearly identifies the proposed topic area outlines the aims, scope, and research questions of the proposed study. In addition, applicants must complete the relevant Studentship Application Form, which should be submitted by email to the Postgraduate Research Student Administrator, Linda Watson, (musicphd@leeds.ac.uk) by midnight on the closing date for applications.

Informal enquiries are encouraged; please contact Dr Karen Burland, email: k.burland@leeds.ac.uk.

Questions regarding the application process should be addressed to the Postgraduate Research Student Administrator, Linda Watson, email: musicphd@leeds.ac.uk.

Closing date for applications: Monday 24th July, 2017.

Interviews will be held: Wednesday 9th August at the University of Leeds