



## Application Pack

### Introduction

**Singing for Our Minds** is a brand new development programme for artists and producers from ethnically diverse groups currently under-represented in the arts. Produced in partnership by Together Productions and the Mind and Soul Choir at the Maudsley Hospital, the programme has been developed by leading practitioners in the field of arts and mental health practice. Course Leaders include Nicola Wydenbach, Aga Serugo-Lugo, Jeremy Haneman, Nadine Benjamin and Darren Abrahams, and the mental health training team from SLaM (South London and Maudsley hospital).

Participants in the programme will learn how to embed practice promoting positive mental health outcomes into their practice, and in doing so to build diverse, inclusive communities within group music settings. There is a particular focus on singing, although music leaders who use singing in their practice may also apply.

The programme is structured as 4 intensive days (over two months Feb/March 2022) which will incorporate skills development, peer learning, resources and signposting and mental health awareness. This will be followed by a 10 month period of supported placements, peer support, mentoring and leadership opportunities. Participation in the programme is FREE and there is support available with expenses and bursary payments for those who need this in order to participate.

More detail on the programme and its content can be found later in this Application Pack.

## Dates and Location

### 1. SFOM Intensive

4 day intensive course in 2022:

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> February 10.00-17.00

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February 10.00-17.00

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March 10.00-17.00

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March 10.00-17.00

As this is a short and intensive course we require applicants to be available for all dates.

### 2. Mentoring, Supervision, Support

March – May 2022: Supported placement workshops, dates TBC (max 4 hours)

May - July 2022: Video project, dates TBC (max 12 hours)

Supervision/support: Ongoing, monthly, until January 2023

**Location:** all activities will take place in venues in and around London.

## Expenses and Bursaries

Participation in the programme is limited to 15 places and is FREE. Travel expenses to and from the venue will be reimbursed (max £13.90 - one day travel card) - for those travelling from further afield additional travel bursaries may be discussed. Bursary payments are available for those who would not otherwise be able to participate (max £60 per day) - this will be discussed on an individual basis.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Is this programme for me?

Singing for Our Minds is open to music leaders and producers over the age of 18 from ethnically diverse groups currently underrepresented in the arts, including those with Black and Asian heritage.

All levels of experience are welcome, as are all types of musical background. You may be a specialist choral or singing leader or vocal practitioner, a music teacher or a singing faith leader. You might be a music or spoken word artist who uses singing as one part of your wider practice, or may wish to do so more. You may be involved in any genre of music, and in any setting; community, schools, professional or non-professional.

You must have a passion to learn and reflect on your practice, and the commitment to engage and invest your time and energy in developing your skills and confidence in using singing to promote positive mental health.

The programme will be shaped around the skills, interests and needs of the group, and there will be frequent opportunities for participants to share their own experiences and talents with the rest of the group, as well as the unique perspectives that each person will bring.

If you'd like to discuss further whether the programme could be right for you, we'd be very happy to have a chat – you'll find our contact details at the bottom of this pack.

### **Why is recruitment focused on ethnically diverse groups?**

This programme has been funded by the Baring Foundation as part of their arts and mental health stream, which has a focus on racial justice and work with ethnically diverse communities. Singing for Our Minds sets out to address the underrepresentation of those with Black and Asian heritage, and other ethnically diverse groups, within the UK arts sector, particularly in leadership. The programme will also advocate more widely within the sector and beyond for the benefits of building diverse and inclusive singing communities, and the risks of failing to do so.

### **What will I learn?**

Singing for Our Minds has been developed to build on the strong evidence base surrounding singing and mental health, looking in more depth at what makes for a healthy singing environment, what some of the challenges or barriers might be and how they can be addressed, and what approaches to leadership and production can be particularly effective when working with singing and mental health.

Led by experienced facilitators, underpinned by research and evidence, and based on models of experiential learning, reflective practice and peer support, the programme will establish a cohort of music leaders who will gain increased confidence and skill in promoting positive mental health outcomes in their practice, whilst developing innovative and new approaches that can be shared more widely with the sector to create an ongoing legacy.

The programme begins with a four-day course (dates above), exploring topics including:

- A Safe Space for Us
- Looking After Ourselves
- The Art of Facilitation
- Mental Health Awareness
- Singing and Trauma
- Discussions, Q&A, peer problem solving and more

All interspersed with plenty of opportunities to sing, move, and make music!

Alongside the course, participants will shadow and subsequently co-lead a series of community singing workshops (Feb – Apr 2022), putting their learning into practice, networking, and reflecting within the peer group. Mentorship and guidance will also be provided by practitioners from a range of fields for 12 months during and after the programme. Participants will also be given free membership of the Singing for Health Network.

The programme culminates with course participants co-producing an innovative participatory music video (May-June 2022), advocating for the power of singing for positive mental health and building community across difference.

Singing For Our Minds is underpinned by an advocacy programme for singing and mental health led by community choir members from diverse backgrounds, including those with lived experience of seeking sanctuary and/or mental health challenges. This cohort will join for elements of both the training and the delivery of the community workshops.

### **Who is the Programme delivered by?**

Singing for Our Minds has been produced in partnership by Together Productions and the Mind and Soul Choir at the Maudsley Hospital, the programme has been developed by leading practitioners in the field of arts and mental health practice. Course Leaders include Nicola Wydenbach, Aga Serugo-Logo, Jeremy Haneman, Nadine Benjamin and Darren Abrahams, and the mental health training team from SLaM (South London and Maudsley hospital). More information can be found about the delivery team in the Further Information section below.

### **How can I find out more?**

**Recruitment/Information Workshop:** Anyone interested in applying for the programme is invited to an open recruitment workshop to find out more. This session is optional and attendance will not affect the outcome of the application process. It will be an opportunity to meet the programme leaders, get a taster of the course and ask any questions you may have.

This workshop will take place on Zoom on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 5.30-6.30pm**. Please register to attend [here](#).

### **Applying for the Programme**

To apply to take part in the programme, please click on the link below. Here you will be asked to share some details about yourself, including why you would like to apply, which can be sent in written, video or audio format.

**[Apply here](#)**

Please email [alexandra@togetherproductions.co.uk](mailto:alexandra@togetherproductions.co.uk) to request an alternative application format.

**Deadline for applications: end of Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**

### **Selection**

There are a maximum of 15 places available on the programme so not all applicants will be offered places. We will select candidates we feel will benefit most from the programme offer. We may call some applicants for further information or clarification in the week commencing 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome by the end of the week commencing 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022. If you are not sure if the programme is right for you, please do arrange a chat with us, by e-mailing [alexandra@togetherproductions.co.uk](mailto:alexandra@togetherproductions.co.uk) and/or join our open workshop to find out more.

**We look forward to hearing from you!**

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### Delivery team

[Jeremy Haneman](#) is a Musical Director and Conductor, and Co-Director of Together Productions. He leads the Mixed Up Chorus, Thames Opera Company and the Linklaters Choir, amongst others. For ten years he was the Community Chorus Director for the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. He has been directing choirs for over 25 years with a particular focus on team building, inclusion and developing leadership, including leading the RTÉ Philharmonic in Dublin, Morley College Choir and the London Gay Men's Chorus. He is a Council Member for the Association of British Choral Directors and he was Director of Music for Fine Arts College for ten years. Jeremy is also the musical director for [One Day One Choir](#), a global annual movement for World Peace Day founded in 2014 that involves over a million singers from all around the world and he has been a visiting Professor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He has pioneered a specialised approach to working with non-auditioned diverse groups enabling high-quality artistic outcomes in a supportive and nurturing environment.

**Aga Serugo-Lugo** is a vocalist, clarinettist, pianist, composer, and workshop leader. He sings in the 9-piece Funk band "Gefunkt", who have played around the UK, Europe and Australia. Also, composed and played for the six-piece jazz-fusion group called 'Eclactiv'. Aga has delivered community workshops for Sing-up, Royal Opera House, ENO Baylis, Music in Detention, Britten Pears Arts and Turtle Key Arts. He works in Education settings for SEN Schools, Trinity Laban, Pegasus Opera, Creative Partnerships and Hatch My Ideas. In addition, Aga co-runs Camberwell community choir and runs sessions for Group A in Lowestoft and Ipswich. Compositional projects include music for theatre: Street cries of London, Wiltons Music Hall (2009), Verona road, Intermission theatre (2010), The Conspirators project, The Yard (2012), Core Blimey: A Corby Musical (2014) and The Old Man And The Sea (2019).

**Nicola Wydenbach** is Musical Director of the Mind and Soul Community Choir which rehearses at the Maudsley Hospital and is for all those affected by mental illness. She is currently part of a MARCH funded research team developing and researching an evidence-based practice and inclusive resources for community singing leaders and people with diverse mental health experiences. She has a Trinity Laban Fellowship for leaders working in participatory music settings, has pioneered co-creation and evaluation with community participants, and also specialises in singing for Parkinson's.

**Darren Abrahams** is a singer, coach, therapist and trainer and is the creator of many programmes designed to expand the potential of individuals and groups. He works internationally as a facilitator and project leader in the fields of personal, cultural and community development, is a qualified trauma therapist, a Certified High Performance Coach and has appeared in opera all over the world. Darren is co-founder of [The Human Hive](#) a global network of people and organisations that work WITH not FOR each other to create a more welcoming and inclusive world and of [The Starr Trust](#) which supports young people to fulfil potential through sports, arts and education. He is on the steering team and head of pastoral care for [The Complete Freedom of Truth](#), an international youth-led project developing global youth citizenship through culture and the arts. Darren is also Wellbeing Adviser and an international trainer for [Musicians Without Borders](#) where he trains musicians to use music for peace building with refugees and in post conflict communities. You can find out more about him at <https://darrenabrahams.com>

**Nadine Benjamin MBE** - Prof. Soprano and Creative Empowerment Coach/Mentor, Founder of Everybody Can! Opera and Mentorship Programme, Former English National Opera Harewood Artist Certified High Performance Coach, Accredited NLP Mind Coach (Diploma), DipMus Music (Performance), Sky Arts Awards Presenter 2021, Women of the Year Attendee 2019, Sky Arts Awards Nominee - The Times Arts Award 2019, Ambassador- London Music Masters , "Highly Commended" at the Aviva Women of the Future Awards 2016, Winner of the Fulham Opera Verdi Prize 2015, Finalist of the Genesis Competition

### **Together Productions**

Together Productions (TP) is a CIC creating positive social change through the arts. Our projects build connections, empathy and community cohesion by uniting diverse and marginalised groups to create high quality artistic outcomes. We seek to bring together individuals, communities and organisations who would otherwise never meet and through creative collaborations we build empathy, understanding and awareness. Our programmes and projects include:

The [Mixed Up Chorus](#), an innovative, non-auditioned, intergenerational and intercultural community choir that sings a global repertoire, celebrates difference and gives voice to under-represented groups.

The [Sing For Freedom](#) choir, a life changing group comprising refugees and asylum seekers who are survivors of torture, and local London allies. As one member says, *"One of the worst things about torture is that it silences you – the choir has given me back a voice"*.

[Together Twilight Sessions](#) –online workshop series introducing the public to international practitioners from diverse backgrounds and musical traditions, including to date North Indian Classical, Korean, Sathya, Gospel, BSL, Arabic, South African singing and Andalusian Mwashshahat.

[Singing Our Lives](#) (SOL) - collaborative composition and performance project bringing together communities including refugees, asylum seekers, and people facing mental health challenges to compose and perform new music. Has involved over 500 performers, 7 world premieres and reached audiences of over 5000. The next phase is an International People's Opera.

Throughout the pandemic, TP have been producing virtual rehearsals, digital concerts and music videos reaching global audiences including in 2020: the [Imagine: Imagine](#) project with Musicians Without Borders, I Speak and IOM, highlighting contributions of displaced people during the pandemic and involving performers across 14 countries in a global music video;partnerships with The Samaritans and Soundabout Inclusive Choirs to produce videos raising awareness about mental health and disability. Recent work can be viewed here: <https://bit.ly/3dg5baN>

### **Mind and Soul Choir**

M&S is for service users and former service users of the Maudsley Hospital and exists to promote mental well-being through singing and to reduce the stigma around mental illness.

Originally set up in 2016 with funding from the Maudsley Charity, Mind and Soul are a choir open to current and ex mental health service users, current and ex member of staff as well as family members and anyone affected by mental health issues. They rehearse within the grounds of the Maudsley and regularly have drop in participants from the wards.

### **SLaM (South London and Maudsley hospital)**

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust based in London, England, or SLaM which specialises in mental health. It comprises three psychiatric hospitals (Bethlem Royal Hospital, Lambeth Hospital and the Maudsley Hospital), the Ladywell Unit based at University Hospital Lewisham, and over 100 community sites and 300 clinical teams

### **Steering Group**

The Programme is also supported by the Singing For Our Minds steering group – an intersectional team of experts, including those with professional experience of arts and mental health practice, as well as with lived experience of mental health challenges and multiple systemic barriers. This group will guide the planning and delivery of the programme, the measurement of its impact and the shaping of its legacy.

