ASMF Associate Fellowship: Information for Applicants

Across the 2026/27 season, Academy of St Martin in the Fields (ASMF) will run an Associate Fellowship scheme for players who are establishing their professional careers. Targeted at violinists, the scheme provide experience in chamber orchestral playing for those developing a portfolio chamber career.

About ASMF

ASMF is one of the world's finest orchestras, renowned for fresh, brilliant interpretations of the world's greatest orchestral music.

Founded in 1958 by Sir Neville Marriner, ASMF has evolved into a musical powerhouse, an orchestra renowned across the world for its commitment to the musical freedom of its players and the sharing of joyful, inspiring performances.

Today, with Music Director Joshua Bell, ASMF's player-led approach empowers every member of the orchestra. This creates a direct and electrifying connection between the orchestra and its audiences, resulting in ambitious and collaborative performances that transcend the more traditional conductor-led model.

Previous participants in the ASMF Associate Fellowship scheme have noted the open and friendly atmosphere of the players, and the warmth of the welcome they received. This is a hallmark of the orchestra, built through the years of close collaboration, the responsibility taken by each player, and the trust that they have in one another.

> *"I can honestly say that being an Associate Fellow of ASMF has been one of the highlights of my musical journey to date. Arriving into my first rehearsal with them back in February, I very quickly realised that this is not just an orchestra, but a family. They are so warm and welcoming, and are the perfect example of a player-led ensemble. They take such pride in their work, and there is a sense that everyone feels an equal responsibility for the music."*

More information about the orchestra and its players can be found on the ASMF website.

Associate Fellowship Scheme

The Associate Fellowship Scheme is designed to give players who are establishing their professional career a paid opportunity to rehearse and perform with ASMF, and receive bespoke coaching and mentorship from its players. The scheme is targeted at those developing a portfolio

chamber career who would benefit from experience in working alongside ASMF's players and playing in a player-directed orchestra.

The scheme offers **two violinists** the opportunity to participate in a programme across our upcoming season (November 2026 – June 2027). The structure and delivery of the scheme have been informed by the valuable learning and feedback received during our pilot year phase.

Those who participate in the programme will receive the following:

- opportunity to rehearse and perform with ASMF on 2 x projects, with performances at St-Martin-in-the-Fields
- opportunity to create, rehearse, and perform in a chamber performance for presentation
- opportunity to sit-in the orchestra during rehearsals with ASMF's Music Director Joshua Bell
- opportunities for 1-1 mentoring and coaching from ASMF players

All rehearsal/performance opportunities will be paid at ASMF's standard rates for tutti players. Selected participants should expect to receive approximately **£2,000** for full participation in the scheme.

"My confidence performing in chamber music settings and in player-led ensembles has grown so much throughout the scheme. It was amazing to receive specific chamber music mentorship from an orchestra of this calibre."

"The ASMF Associate Fellowship offers an unparalleled glimpse into the professional life of a chamber orchestra musician, refining one's orchestral skills, but also leadership skills through its chamber project, where Associate Fellows curate their own programme and collaborate with ASMF musicians in their own concert"

Who the scheme is for

We understand that people at all stages of their careers are keen to get experience of orchestral playing. The ASMF offer is distinctive in its chamber focus, providing opportunities for coaching and mentoring from our players in small and orchestral-sized forces. The scheme is ideal for people who want to gain support and experience to help develop their portfolio chamber career.

Those taking part will sit at the heart of the orchestra during important, public-facing projects in the orchestra's diary. As a result, the criteria and audition process are designed to find players who are at the right stage to participate in and learn from this scheme.

We are looking for people who:

- **Are violin players in the earlier stages of their career**: There are no specific age restrictions.
- **Are interested in developing a portfolio chamber career**: It may be that you are still considering your future path, but have a keen interest in exploring this area.
- **Have experience playing in a professional orchestral setting**: This could be through other orchestral Fellowship, paid engagements, or professional playing experiences within higher education.
- **Understand the demands of playing in a player-led chamber orchestra**: While you don't need specific experience in this area, you are expected to understand and be willing to rise to the individual responsibility that comes with playing in this setting.
- **Have a clear sense of what they would like to get from the scheme**: We will assess whether this scheme is the right one for you through the application and audition process.
- **Are available for all of the key project dates noted below**: You are expected to be able to commit to the key dates outlined above.
- **Are based in the UK with ability to travel to London for the projects and rehearsals listed below, and further coaching opportunities**: Please note, we are unable to offer a payment for travel associated with projects, but selected Fellows will be paid tutti rates for all engagements.

We welcome applications from musicians of all backgrounds and relevant experience. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment and encourage applicants to tell us about any access needs or adjustments that would support them through the application or audition process.

Key Dates

<u>Application process</u>

22 July	Applications open
19 August	Deadline for applications
21 September	Second-round auditions
24 September	Third-round auditions/Interviews

<u>Key projects</u>

11 – 12 November	Rehearsal and performance – St Martin in the Fields 300th Anniversary Concert
4 – 5 January	Rehearsal opportunity with Joshua Bell (no performance)
April *tbc*	Chamber Music Project
22 - 24 June	Rehearsal and performance – ASMF and Sterling Elliot at St Martin in the Fields

Additional coaching and mentoring opportunities will be scheduled with the successful applicants.

Applicants are expected to be available for all of the key projects above.

Associate Fellows may be offered additional performance opportunities with ASMF throughout the year, as well as opportunities to gain experience in ASMF's Social Purpose programme.

Selection process

Interested candidates are encouraged to submit the following to Musical Chairs by 10:00am on Wednesday 19th August:

- a professional CV outlining your relevant experience to date
- a statement of up to 400 words outlining:
    - why you are interested in the scheme
    - what you hope to gain from the experience
    - what your personal goals are and how this opportunity would help
- A short pre-recorded video of you playing the exposition from a Mozart concerto (no cadenza) or a movement of a Bach sonata (unaccompanied) of your choosing. Please see our Audition Requirements document for more information and recording instructions.

The video and CV will be redacted before being sent to the selection panel, meaning the first-stage of selection will be 'blind'.

Candidates selected for audition will receive an invitation to audition by 04 September 2026.

The **second-stage is a solo audition** held on 21st September. This will include solo playing and excerpts. Our preference is for this to be in person but we will consider online auditions if that is the best option for the candidate. There will be no accompanist for these auditions.

Those selected for a **third stage in-person audition** will be notified by 22nd September. This round will take place on 24th September including chamber/side-by-side playing with ASMF musicians, followed by a short interview with the panel.

Please see our separate Audition Requirements document on the ASMF website for full details about each stage.

If you have any questions please email esmesullivan@asmg.org. All applications are to be completed directly on Musical Chairs.