

Conductor Search – Ylioppilaskunnan Soittajat (YS)

Ylioppilaskunnan Soittajat (YS), unofficially Helsinki University Symphony Orchestra, is looking for a new conductor, starting from spring 2022. The application deadline is January 31, 2022.

YS is a full-size symphony orchestra operating within the Student Union of the University of Helsinki. Its roots go back to 1747, when the Academic Orchestra – the first permanent orchestra in Finland – was established under the auspices of the Turku Academy, the predecessor of the University of Helsinki. On 14 April, 1926, this orchestral activity was reorganized, leading to the establishment of Ylioppilaskunnan Soittajat. During its 95 years, YS has been conducted by Toivo Haapanen, Jussi Jalas, Erik Cronvall, Leif Segerstam, Kari Tikka, Ilpo Mansnerus, Ylermi Pöijärvi, Alf Nybo, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Petri Sakari, Markus Lehtinen, Tuomas Pirilä, Michael Adelson, John Storgårds, Tuomas Rousi, Jyri Nissilä, David Searle, Mikk Murdvee and Tomas Djupsjöbacka.

The members of the orchestra are mainly students at the University of Helsinki, but there are also students from other educational institutions in the Helsinki metropolitan area as well as alumni of the universities. Although YS is an amateur orchestra, all members have a passionate attitude to their playing, and a notable portion have progressed to the professional level in their music hobby.

The members of the orchestra run the activities of the orchestra: among other tasks, they decide on the concert programs (together with the conductor) and take care of the organization of the concerts. To finance the activities, members play in hired gigs for smaller ensembles and the salon orchestra. Typically, YS prepares one main concert program for the autumn season and one for the spring season, with concerts in November/December and April/May both within and outside the Helsinki metropolitan area. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings from 6 pm to 9 pm in the center of Helsinki. In addition, a rehearsal weekend will be held a few weeks before the concerts.

Job description and requirements

Our next conductor should have solid experience in conducting and rehearsing a symphony orchestra, artistic vision, an artistic approach to their work, as well as enthusiasm and motivation to work with an amateur orchestra. In addition, we require commitment to YS training schedules on Monday evenings. Formal qualification in orchestral conducting is considered an advantage but is not a prerequisite.

The conductor of YS also serves as a member of the YS board and participates in the practical matters of the orchestra: planning, and when relevant, implementation. YS does not have an actual artistic director, but rather, artistic guidelines are reflected upon in the Artistic Committee (TaiTo, Taiteellinen toimikunta), which consists of the conductor, the chairperson of the orchestra, a representative of the concertmasters, and members elected annually from various instrumental groups. The concert program, based on TaiTo's proposal, will be decided by the YS General Assembly in the autumn and spring.

The conductor is elected for a one-year period at a time in accordance with the rules of the association. The conductor is paid a fee per rehearsal as well as a slightly higher fee for concerts.

How to apply

Send a free-form application where you introduce yourself and explain why you are interested in conducting Ylioppilaskunnan Soittajat. The application must be accompanied with your exact contact information and CV. If desired, you may accompany your application by recommendations or video material on your conducting. The application must state whether you will be able to serve as the conductor of YS as early as spring 2022. It is to your advantage if you are able to start immediately after having been selected for the job.

Applications are submitted electronically to the chairperson of YS by 31 January, 2022, to puheenjohtaja@ys.fi.

The board of YS will interview suitable applicants in January. On the basis of the applications and interviews, a selected number of applicants are invited to the tryouts. The tryouts will be held on Saturday, **February 19, 2022**, starting at 10 a.m., in Helsinki. The work to be conducted is Pyotr Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, *Fantasy Overture*. The conductor will be elected by the General Assembly of the association on **February 21, 2022**. The spring season of YS is already underway at the time of the selection.

For more information, please contact:

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