



OXFORD BACH SOLOISTS

Scholarship Description: OBS Continuo Scholar
Date Modified: 09.06.2025

Title: Continuo Scholar	Organisation: Oxford Bach Soloists
Location: Various	Term: September 2025-August 2026 incl.
Agreement type: Scholarship	Reporting to: Executive Director

About the Oxford Bach Soloists

The **Oxford Bach Soloists** (OBS) is expanding its commitment to developing emerging talent with the launch of its new Continuo Scholar scheme. Building on the success of its established Choral Scholarships, this initiative offers young continuo players the opportunity to rehearse and perform side-by-side with leading period instrument specialists across an entire OBS season. The scheme is designed to nurture future professional continuo players through one-to-one instrumental tuition, ensemble coaching, and regular performance experience within a historically informed context. With a £1,000 stipend and access to period instruments where needed for performances, the scheme ensures accessibility for all talented applicants, regardless of background or prior experience on historical instruments. As OBS looks ahead to a new artistic chapter, this scheme reaffirms its commitment to sustaining the art of Baroque performance and supporting the next generation of specialist instrumentalists.

Registered charity number: 1172192

For further information on OBS please see: www.oxfordbachsoloists.com

Overview of the role

OBS presents a regular concert series each year, including performances of the *Passion on Good Friday* and the Christmas Oratorio in the New Year. Most concerts take place monthly in Oxford, with occasional additional projects throughout the season.

Continuo Scholars will be engaged across the season from **September to August** and form an integral part of the OBS continuo section. Working alongside our professional section leaders and period instrumentalists, they contribute to the musical foundation of each performance. The core ensemble includes experienced players from across the UK, and Continuo Scholars are expected to support the stability and stylistic consistency of the group.

Scholars should view this as a professional development opportunity, using rehearsals and performances to build confidence and expertise in historical performance practice. Instrumental coaching and ensemble training will be provided, with tailored support offered to those new to period instruments.

Responsibilities / duties

- Shadow the Principal Organist and Principal Harpsichordist in rehearsals and concerts in the 25-26 season
- Prepare arias and recitatives for projects as communicated by the Executive Director

- Undertake coaching sessions from the Principal Organist and Harpsichordist. The focus of these sessions will be the realisation of figured bass in a creative and collaborative environment
- Prepare to deputise for the Principal Organist and Harpsichordist as required
- Contribute to a short blog/newsletter keeping funders updated with progress and experiences.
- Attend occasional Friends' social events to interface with donors and supporters.
- Any other tasks as reasonably requested by the Executive Director.

Typical Timetable

OBS' core programme consists of an average of one concert per month. Concerts are preceded by individual coaching, as well as tutti company rehearsals.

Confirmed rehearsal times are released one month in advance. A typical concert schedule could consist of a patch of two or three consecutive days of rehearsals leading up to the concert day.

The Candidate

It is foreseen that the successful candidate will be a keyboard player at the outset of their professional career, with an interest in early music, particularly the solo and ensemble works of JS Bach.

The successful candidate will:

- Have an interest in realising figured bass.
- Demonstrate a high level of technical and musical ability, equivalent to ARCO standard or similar continuo experience.
- Be available to make regular trips to Oxford for coaching sessions, rehearsals and concerts
- Show a broad interest in early music, and an enthusiasm for working with both singers and other instrumentalists in a variety of repertoire
- Learn repertoire quickly and thoroughly

Terms

Continuo Scholars receive up to £1,000 per annum.

Application

Candidates are asked to apply via the form online at www.oxfordbachsoloists.com/vacancies with the following:

- a CV,
- a headshot,
- video and audio of a solo keyboard work by Bach,
- a cover letter answering the following questions:
 1. Why do you want a Continuo Scholarship with the Oxford Bach Soloists?
 2. What are your long-term musical performance goals?
 3. What would a Continuo Scholarship allow you to bring to the Oxford Bach Soloists?

Applications close at 12 noon on Thursday 10th July 2025

Audition procedure

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an audition and interview (in person) in Oxford on Thursday 17th July 2025. Candidates are asked to keep this date free, but to indicate if an alternative date is necessary. All applicants will be informed by email whether they have been shortlisted by Monday 14th July by 5pm.