



## **SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC**

### **NATIONAL FEMALE COMPOSERS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

#### **Background**

Classical music composition is currently a male-dominated profession, and this has been a historical situation for centuries.

Recognized and influential Australian composers including Elena Kats-Chernin, Liza Lim, Anne Boyd, Mary Finsterer, Moya Henderson, Rosalind Page and Maria Grenfell make significant and sustained contributions to Australian contemporary classical music. However women make up only 26% of represented composers at the Australian Music Centre. Female APRA members constitute only 20% of the national pool of composers and songwriters.

While the situation is improving at the undergraduate level, with 44% of currently enrolled composition undergraduates at the Sydney Conservatorium being female, there is a problem in getting music composed by women to the higher levels, especially when it comes to longer-term relationships with national music organisations.

Improvements in music composition artistic ability typically happen via workshops and performances of new works, especially at the emerging composer level. It is these scenarios in which the most is learnt. A sustained 'hot housing' program would help to ensure that relevant technical skills for a variety of high level music ensembles and artists can be learnt in the most productive and meaningful way. It will also help to ensure that these high level arts organizations are aware of the existence and work of these emerging women composers, and have the opportunity to commission one of them in the future.

Furthermore, the opportunity to create match improvements in artistic ability with improvements in marketing and business ability will give every chance for women composers to break into traditionally male-dominated fields.

The Sydney Conservatorium is well-placed to initiate a unique program to address this issue in that it is a training institution that attracts a large number of emerging composers (the largest in the country), contains a spread of Australia's finest composers on its staff, and has the relevant infrastructure support staff to enable this program to be a success. The Sydney Conservatorium has the appropriate status in the musical community to help attract significant Performing Arts Company and Artist Partners with whom the emerging composers will work.

#### **Project Summary**

Five women composers will be selected from a national promotional campaign co-ordinated by the Sydney Con.

Students must enrol, or be enrolled in, a Master of Music (Composition), Master of Music Studies (Composition) or DMA degree in Composition.

There is no age limit.

The successful candidates must commit to a 2(+1) year program.

In the first 2-year core part of the program, fellowship composers will write new works for five different Performing Arts Companies or Artists. In both Years 1 and 2, they will do the following for each piece:

1. Work in a group with an assigned mentor expert to the ensemble being written for.
2. Undertake lessons with their degree supervisor, plus 1 x private lesson on their piece before the workshop with the expert mentor.
3. Workshop one new piece with every Performing Arts Company Partner.
4. Attend a group debrief session including a representative from the Performing Arts Company or Artist Partner, facilitated by a member of the CMPN Unit staff.

#### Part 1 - Artistic Skills Development

**Year 1:** Sessions and workshops with each organisation, as listed above.

**Year 2:** Sessions and workshops with the same organisations, including performances of the works if appropriate. This gives composers the opportunity to take what they have learnt in Year 1, and apply it directly in Year 2.

**Year 3:** Each Performing Arts Company and Artist Partner commissions a new work from a composer of their choice - one of the 5 fellowship composers, with the new piece to be premiered in Year 3 or Year 4 (participating organisations/artists will be expected to cover the cost of the commission).

#### Part 2 - Business Skills Development

Marketing, networking, promotion and media skills, negotiation workshops will take place over the first 2 years of the program.

#### High Level Objectives

1. To increase the percentage of professional, commissioned female composers in Australia.
2. To actively work with female composition students to develop their career management skills in conjunction with artistic skills.
3. To provide an industry context for students to have their works performed and include these works in their degree and professional portfolios.
4. To introduce the works of emerging female composers to high level arts companies and performing artists.
5. To promote the Sydney Conservatorium as a leader in the championing women composers.
6. To increase female enrolment in Postgraduate Composition.

#### Preparation Milestones

1. Consultation with existing female undergraduate students re. the program and whether it would be of interest to them – 1 April 2015
2. Financial support approved - DATE
3. Detailed selection criteria- DATE
4. MOUs with participating performing arts companies- DATE
5. Promotion and applications- DATE
6. Selection- DATE
7. Commencement- DATE

#### Potential Performing Arts Company Partners and Artists

- Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra – Agreed in principle
- Sydney Philharmonia – Agreed in principle
- SSO
- Musica Viva
- SCM Wind Symphony – commission would be paid for by Sydney Con
- Ensemble Offspring
- Claire Edwardes (will require performance fee) – Agreed in principle
- Australian String Quartet

**Budget**

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Composers travel	\$4,000	\$4,000	
Composers accommodation	\$2,500	\$2,500	
Mentors	\$2,500	\$2,500	
Business skills teachers	\$2,500	\$2,500	
Marketing & Promotion	\$1,000		
Other	\$1,000		