

4 November 2014

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Mr Ronan Cregan
Director of Finance & Resources
Belfast City Council
City Hall
BELFAST BT1 5GS

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES	
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Dear Mr Cregan

The City of Belfast Youth Orchestra (CBYO) celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2015 and to mark this occasion the orchestra will visit the East Coast of the USA from 14-23 July 2015. I am writing to request financial support of £25,000 from Belfast City Council for this 10 day concert tour which will include performances in New York and Boston.

CBYO is the oldest youth orchestra in Ireland and since its inception in 1955 the orchestra has drawn young people together from all sections of the community. Working together through a shared love of music, the members of the orchestra have the opportunity to build relationships with their peers from other parts of the city across the religious divide. The City of Belfast School of Music sends a group abroad each year and on these occasions the students present a positive image of young people and are ambassadors for Belfast and Northern Ireland. During the most recent tours to France (2011) and Italy (2013), CBYO was honoured to play for the Irish Ambassador and a representative from the British Embassy in both Paris and Rome.

Taking an orchestra of 80 players and 10 staff to America presents significant challenges and opportunities and we are excited that CBYO has the opportunity to be involved as Belfast develops new links with its sister city of Boston. During his visit to Belfast in September 2014, the Mayor of Boston invited the orchestra to play in Boston Town Hall and we have started to foster links with our counterparts in Boston in the hope that a reciprocal visit can be arranged in the future.

We are working hard to reach our financial target of £180,000 and expect to receive £105,000 from individual contributions and £50,000 through corporate sponsorship and fundraising activities organised by the Friends of CBYO and by the students themselves. The £25,000 sought from the Council will make up the balance. The funding would be needed in April 2015 but we are seeking an early confirmation so that booking arrangements can be made as early as possible in order that costs can be kept to a minimum.

The City of Belfast School of Music engages in a positive partnership with the City Council and in recent years has participated in notable city events including the opening of the Titanic Memorial Garden, the Olympic Torch Ceremony and the World Police and Fire Games. Our students continue to make a significant contribution to the cultural life and reputation of the city and I hope that the City Council will look favourably on this application for the City of Belfast Youth Orchestra's 60th anniversary tour to Boston and New York 2015.

A copy of our brochure setting out details of the tour is enclosed and I will be available to meet with Council representatives to provide them with any further information that they require.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Rowena Eames, Head of Music Service, BELB