

# A new nationwide project to celebrate the resilience of choirs is launched

During this year's various lock-downs and other restrictions choirs and singing communities have proved adaptable, willing to address enforced isolation by embracing new technologies, and able to rise to the challenges of messy complicated socially distanced singing.

Inspired by this resilience, Love Music, producers of Scotland's largest community choir based at the Usher Hall in Edinburgh, is offering a seed of continuing inspiration and an opportunity for singing groups, community choirs and songwriters across Scotland to join together on a journey of song creation through its new project 'Love Singing'.

'Love Singing' is a community engagement initiative aimed at promoting and supporting creative, healthy singing communities across Scotland.



It focuses on collaborative practice, connecting choirs across the country, addressing digital isolation, increasing tech skills and confidence, and buddying up with professional

songwriters to commission five brand new songs and a bank of useful and accessible song resources, providing information and motivation to help people stay connected in these challenging times. The project is made possible with funding from Creative Scotland.

The 8-month project through to August 2021 will tackle the ongoing challenges of distanced rehearsals and remote learning head on, sharing the journey as it happens through a series of blogs, and creating an online information bank of what is learned, sharing the trials and triumphs with choir leaders across Scotland.

Today Love Music launches the search for ten key collaborators on the project.

'Love Singing' revolves around five new commissions from five of Scotland's most talented songwriters and five community singing groups who will be integral to creating the new commissions and this information resource under the experienced hand of Love Music.



The choirs must be open to discussing and developing ways of addressing digital exclusion, willing to test approaches to increasing access for isolated and vulnerable people, be

willing to take part in evaluation throughout the project and be consulted on their experiences, and share in Love Music's ethos of inclusion, access, equality and celebration of diversity. Information and an application form is on the 'Love Singing' website – [sing.lovemusic.org.uk](http://sing.lovemusic.org.uk)

All five community choirs will come together in super-scaled digital zoom sessions to meet each other, meet the songwriters, share their work and cheer each other on. The five finished songs will be crafted and shaped to be inclusive and accessible, and then made available to be shared and sung by choirs everywhere as part of the online open-access resource bank being created through Love Singing.

'Love Singing' offers songwriters a commission to create a new song specially for community singers and an opportunity to develop their piece in collaboration with their partnered choir. They will also receive support and mentoring from Love Music's artistic director Stephen Deazley during the creation process to ensure accessibility and impact for community musicians, and support to make choral arrangements if needed.

The new work will be recorded and produced by professional musicians and widely publicised. Composers should be willing to reflect on their writing and their role in the project, have a desire to create music specifically for community singers of all abilities and levels of experience, and be happy to make the rights for the piece freely available for choirs across the country to access.



Stephen Deazley, Love Music's artistic director says "Choirs up and down the land provide a great service and support to individuals and communities. While 2020 has put up plenty of

barriers, it has also pulled some truths into sharp focus, just how valuable these projects are for our own well-being, for friendships, for maintaining healthy and creative communities, and how profoundly they would be missed.

“But we know they’ll continue to thrive far beyond these times because they are needed. The voice was made for singing, and people were made to gather, share stories, sing their sadness and their joys. You can’t stop people singing. That’s a fact. We want to make a positive contribution to this moment, not to be beaten by it but to help create something new.

“And applaud the efforts of all the choirs and singing groups out there, missing something yes, but not giving up.”

*Image credits – Andy Catlin, Mihaela Bodlovic, Louise Mather*