Artistic Conducting Fellowship

The Bach Choir of Bethlehem | 440 Heckewelder Place, Bethlehem, PA 18018

ABOUT THE BACH CHOIR OF BETHLEHEM

Founded in 1898, the Bach Choir of Bethlehem is the oldest Bach choir in the United States, internationally recognized for its commitment to artistic excellence, historically informed performance, and meaningful civic engagement. For more than 125 years, the Choir has served as a cultural anchor in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley while maintaining a global profile through recordings, tours, and artistic collaborations. The Choir presents approximately 30 performances annually, including the internationally recognized Bethlehem Bach Festival; the Bach at Noon concert series; and educational programming reaching thousands of students and families each year. The organization maintains its own professional orchestra, the Bach Festival Orchestra, and regularly collaborates with renowned professional soloists and leading academic and cultural institutions.

THE FELLOWSHIP

The Artistic Conducting Fellowship is a highly selective, immersive two-year professional training program for emerging conductors seeking meaningful podium experience, mentorship within a major American choral institution, and a sophisticated understanding of how artistic excellence and nonprofit leadership intersect. The Fellow receives sustained, individualized training and coaching alongside significant podium time in rehearsals and performances. The program supports one Fellow at a time, ensuring depth, rigor, and individualized development. Few programs in the choral field offer this level of mentored leadership experience inside a major cultural institution; the Fellow gains substantial artistic experience, a professional network, and readiness for a career spanning artistic and nonprofit leadership.

The Fellowship includes:

- Sustained conducting and rehearsing opportunities across a full season
- Direct mentorship from a senior Artistic Director
- Regular collaboration with professional orchestral musicians and elite soloists
- Embedded exposure to nonprofit governance, finance, production, and education
- Participation in a high-performing organization of national and international relevance
- Additional opportunities based on the Fellow's expertise — e.g., work with the Bel Canto Youth Chorus and further performance opportunities

CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION

The Fellow is a part-time, W-2 employee of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem — not an independent contractor — and is non-exempt under applicable wage-and-hour law. Compensation is **$20,000–$25,000 per year**, commensurate with experience and scope of work, paid as a salary in equal installments through the Choir's regular payroll with all applicable taxes withheld. The salary corresponds to an expected schedule of approximately 15 hours per week. Because the role intensifies seasonally around concerts and festivals, the Fellow will record actual hours worked, and any hours worked beyond 40 in a workweek will be paid at the overtime rate required by law, in addition to salary. The position includes workers' compensation coverage and other protections applicable to employees.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITMENT

- The fellowship may be completed in person or hybrid, with work based in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The expectation is approximately 15 hours per week, with seasonal intensification around concerts and festivals.
- Mandatory in-person commitments include Monday evening rehearsals and other assigned rehearsals and performances.
- The fellowship is intended to be a meaningful, prioritized component of the Fellow's professional income, typically complemented by other work such as concurrent graduate enrollment, a church position, teaching, or ensemble leadership. The Choir is pleased to leverage its professional and community network to facilitate introductions to potential complementary employers when appropriate.

CHILD PROTECTION CLEARANCES

Components of the fellowship that involve direct contact with minors — including any work with the Bel Canto Youth Chorus — require the Fellow to obtain and maintain current Pennsylvania child-protection clearances before such contact begins: the Pennsylvania State Police criminal history record check, the Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance, and an FBI fingerprint-based criminal background check, renewed as required by Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law. The Choir will cover the cost of obtaining and renewing these clearances. Assignment to any duties involving minors is contingent on clearances being current.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be authorized to work in the United States as of the fellowship's start date. **This position does not offer or sponsor employment visas.** Applicants should be currently enrolled in a graduate-level choral conducting program or hold comparable professional experience.

Preferred experience includes historically informed performance practice, German-language proficiency, experience with volunteer or semi-professional choral ensembles, and an interest in nonprofit arts leadership. There is no age requirement, and the fellowship is structured to allow participants to hold other employment or pursue concurrent studies.

The Bach Choir of Bethlehem is an Equal Opportunity Employer and provides reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees with disabilities. To request an accommodation during the application process, contact Alaina Swartz at (610) 866-4382 ext. 116 or aswartz@bach.org.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

See **https://bachchoirofbethlehem.slideroom.com/** for full description of application requirements, including:

- Statement of interest
- CV and major repertoire list
- Three letters of recommendation
- Three video selections — two rehearsal clips (5–10 min. each) and one performance clip (5–10 min.), all within the last 3 years; contrasting styles / historical eras preferred

HOW TO APPLY & TIMELINE

Apply at: https://bachchoirofbethlehem.slideroom.com/

Portal opens: October 12, 2026 **Applications due:** December 15, 2026, 11:59 PM EST

January 2027 — Up to three finalists will be notified and invited to Bethlehem, PA for an in-person interview and conducting demonstration. Travel and accommodation for the finalist visit are the responsibility of the candidate.
February 28, 2027 — The selected candidate will be notified.
August 16, 2027 — Fellowship program start date.