

MELBA OPERA TRUST



2027 Repetiteur Scholarship Information

melbaoperatrust.com.au





Cover: Sophie Blades, Zachary Hamilton-Russell and Jack Bolton
image: David Ng

Above: Zachary Hamilton-Russell, Sophie Blades and Devon Lake
image: Hilary Walker

Melba Opera Trust delivers Australia's premier scholarship program for promising young opera singers and aspiring répétiteurs.

The Melba Program prepares artists for the rigours of a professional career in opera. Three development streams underpin our comprehensive approach: Artistic Development, Mentoring and Performance. The program creates a steadfast foundation for scholarship recipients to launch their careers as performing artists.

Artistic Development

Artists receive funding to underwrite an individually tailored Artistic Development Plan. This is developed in consultation with the Artistic Manager and CEO and is periodically reviewed. Plans are required to address a balance of languages, repertoire development and professional development activities. To deliver the individual plan, artists nominate their preferred service providers. Melba Opera Trust provides support with guidance and introductions.

Mentor Program

The Mentor Program consists of a series of workshops and seminars with industry experts throughout the year. It focuses on equipping artists with practical professional skills, while fostering a supportive industry network for their continued development. National and international experts are enlisted as mentors to cultivate a global understanding of the industry. In addition to audition preparation and masterclasses, the Mentor Program encourages the artists to develop their business skills, giving them access to legal and accounting professionals, sessions on networking, negotiation, grant writing, media training, time management and more. Skilled practitioners also nurture the artists' personal development, health and wellbeing.

Performance Program

The Performance Program creates performance opportunities for artists to put their learning into practice. Performances range from concerts in metropolitan and regional venues, to intimate private gatherings and special events. The objective is to provide regular performance opportunities and facilitate experience as performing artists. Through this program, artists will learn how to plan and execute their own performances, gain experience in interacting with an audience and have the opportunity to raise their performance profile.



Sharolyn Kimmorley AM and Su Choung, image: David Ng

Important Information for Applicants

Repetiteur Scholarship

The 2027 Repetiteur Scholarship is focused on developing specialised repetiteur skills for an established accompanist/pianist. The repetiteur will:

- be an active participant in the Mentor Program and work intensively with Melba Artists, preparing them for performances as a participant in the Performance Program
- receive mentoring from Artistic Manager and Artist Advisor Sharolyn Kimmorley AM
- work with national and international visiting artists, repetiteurs and vocal experts
- receive scholarship funding for an individualised development plan to include study in languages, coaching with repetiteurs and conductors, and professional development activities.

Eligibility Criteria

The 2027 Repetiteur must be:

- committed to specialising as a repetiteur
- an Australian citizen.

Selection Criteria

Applicants must demonstrate:

- a high degree of technical piano ability and sight-reading skills
- a high degree of interpretation and musicianship in vocal repertoire
- an understanding of the role of a repetiteur
- availability to attend Mentor Program sessions and participate in the Performance Program
- dedication and commitment to carrying forward their professional development
- the ability to self-motivate and be organised
- the potential to be an ambassador for Melba Opera Trust.



Caitlin Hulcup and Stacey Yang, image: David Ng

Important Information for Applicants

Application Guidelines

- The Melba Program is designed for répétiteurs that have completed their formal academic studies and are looking to establish themselves as professionals in the industry. It is not practical to undertake another formal development or academic program alongside a Melba Opera Trust scholarship.
- Funding is to be used within Australia for programs of study approved by Melba Opera Trust and is conditional on attendance at the Mentor Program sessions and participation in the Performance Program. Repeat artists may be considered exempt from certain aspects of the Mentor Program in recognition of prior learning.
- Scholarship funds are to be expended in the 2027 calendar year.
- The applicant is responsible for ensuring they have gained permission from referees to provide Melba Opera Trust with their contact details.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all attached files are provided in the appropriate file type.
- In submitting an application, the applicant certifies that the information contained in the application form and the documents submitted is all true and correct, is not misleading or deceptive and that no material information has been omitted or deleted.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- Decisions of the panel are final and applicants agree to accept the outcome. There is no forum to challenge or appeal the decision on any ground, nor is feedback given.
- Communication or attempt to communicate by or on behalf of an applicant with any member of the selection panel is not permitted.
- Melba Opera Trust reserves the right not to award any or all scholarships in any given year.

The Melba Program – FAQs

Applications/Auditions

How do I know if I am ready for the Melba Program?

The Melba Program is for artists who are 21 to 35 years of age and are at a pre-professional stage in their career development. Typically, recipients have completed their formal tertiary studies (although this is not a requirement) and are preparing either to enter the profession or to continue their operatic development overseas.

How much does it cost to apply?

There is no cost to apply to the Melba Program.

What if I'm not available for the live audition?

It is a requirement of the audition process that shortlisted recipients present for a live audition and interview with the Melba selection panel on the nominated date. There are no exceptions.

If I am unsuccessful, can I request feedback?

Due to the high volume of applicants we are unable to provide individual feedback on applications or auditions.

Scholarships

How many scholarships are there and what kind?

Up to 8 artists are selected each year from around Australia to participate in this intensive, year-long artistic development program. The program is fully funded with scholarships available for singers and répétiteurs.

What is included in the scholarship?

Participation in all aspects of the Melba Program. Recipients also receive funding to underwrite a tailored artistic development plan and to cover the cost of individual coaching with industry experts. Performance fees are paid in addition to the scholarship.

Structure of the Melba Program

What is the focus of the program?

It is a year-long program of intensive, self-motivated development.

The Melba Program aims to equip artists with the practical tools they need to succeed in an operatic career. There is an equal focus on artistic preparation, learning the business of opera, personal development (such as health and wellbeing), and establishing a network within the international industry. Typically, Melba Artists leave the program as polished freelance artists, able to apply the skills they have learnt to their chosen career paths.

How is the year structured?

Melba Artists come together as a group in Melbourne 7 to 8 times per year for week-long intensives. The cost of travel and accommodation for interstate participants is included in their scholarship.

The intensives are periods of activity that include workshops, coaching, seminars, rehearsals and performances. A high level of preparation is required for these intensives, particularly in relation to repertoire and languages.

Outside of these intensives, recipients are expected to continue their tailored artistic development plan, including lessons, coaching, language and other agreed development activities.

Why can't I undertake a second development program whilst being a Melba Artist?

The preparation required for these intensives – both the performances and the individual artistic development plan – requires a significant investment of time and personal commitment throughout the entire year. It is not practical for a recipient to undertake additional development activity.

When will the 2027 Melba Program begin?

The Melba Program runs for an entire calendar year. Intensives commence in February 2027.



Stacey Yang and Brett Weymark OAM, image: David Ng

Application Process – Actions to Complete

Stage 1 Repetiteur Application

Applications close at 11.59pm AEST on Monday 31 August 2026. Applications that are incomplete or submitted after this time will not be accepted. Melba Opera Trust will acknowledge receipt of your application by email.

Prepare two PDF files (combined 10MB maximum size) containing:

PDF 1: Completed Expression of Interest (max 500 words): Outline your interest in specialising as an operatic repetiteur and your experience to date.

PDF 2: Supporting documents including:

Your CV – please include the following:

- Tertiary study – full details of all courses completed/completing, including name of course, name of institution and campus, duration (years) and year completed/completing. Do not include the name of your teacher.
- Professional or musical experience – dates and organisations.
- Any other training undertaken (including language courses).
- Contact details of two professional referees (not your piano teacher).
- Proof of Australian Citizenship and age – please include a copy of a passport or birth certificate, or a similar official document that confirms date and birthplace.

Please note: all files provided should ONLY be in PDF format.

Once your application is finished, use the **CHECKLIST FOR REPETITEUR APPLICANTS** (see page 7) to ensure all areas have been completed before submitting your application.

Successful applicants advancing to Stage 2 of the selection process will be invited to a live audition and interview in Melbourne.

Stage 2 Live Audition and Interview

Live auditions and interviews will take place in Melbourne on Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 November 2026 in front of a selection panel of industry experts. Melba Opera Trust will notify all applicants advancing to Stage 2 of the date, time and venue details by Friday 2 October 2026. Auditions will last for approximately 20 minutes.

Melba Opera Trust will notify all Stage 2 applicants of the outcome of the live auditions by **Monday 16 November 2026.**



Checklist for Repetiteur Applicants

- ☐ I have read IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS in the 2027 REPETITEUR SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION Brochure.
- ☐ I have included two PDF files (combined max. 10MB):
 - ☐ **One PDF** of my Expression of Interest
 - ☐ **One PDF** of my Supporting documents including:
 - ☐ my CV
 - ☐ contact details of two referees
 - ☐ a scanned copy of passport or birth certificate, or a similar official document that confirms date and place of birth as proof of Australian Citizenship and age.
- ☐ I have submitted my application at
<https://www.melbaoperatrust.com.au/2027-repetiteur-scholarship-application/>

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