ConductIT factsheet

What is it?

ConductIT is a completely free online resource to support the study of conducting. The most comprehensive resource of its kind, it offers material relating to conducting technique; rehearsal skills; score study and preparation; performance; leadership; study routes; advice from established and early-career conductors; input from orchestral musicians, managers, agents and other industry stakeholders.

Who is it for?

Anyone with an interest in conducting will find something for them in ConductIT. It can be used by conducting students from absolute beginners through to experienced professionals. Conducting teachers can use the material in a completely flexible way in their own practice. Music lovers who want to learn about what conductors do will find lots of informative and engagingly presented material. We are very aware that the overwhelming majority of people who do some conducting, do so as part of a wider career – perhaps as a teacher or performer, or in the non-professional sector. Providing a structured learning environment for those who would not undertake full-time conducting study is a key focus of the project.

Who made it?

ConductIT is an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership comprising the University of Stavanger (Norway), the Royal Northern College of Music (UK), the University of Aveiro (Portugal), and the Open University (UK). The lead content author is Professor Mark Heron, Head of Conducting at the RNCM, which is regarded as one of the leading conducting programmes in the world. More than 60 professional musicians were involved in producing content – as conductors, instrumentalists, composers and arrangers, authors, interviewees, interviewers, editors and more.

Is it just about orchestral conducting?

The content is a broad as possible and we specifically address different genres – orchestra, wind band, brass band, choir, opera, new music, jazz-influenced repertoire. We also consider the worlds of professional, amateur and youth music-making.

www.ConductIT.eu

How is it organised?

There are 5 main areas on the ConductIT website:
- MOOC
- Study Room
- Rehearsal Studio
- Careers Office
- Library

The MOOC ("Massive Open Online Course") is a short, standalone introduction to conducting. It contains basic information about technique, rehearsing, score study and leadership and is ideal for beginners to work through in a structured way, for example, as pre-course preparation for an introduction to conducting module within an undergraduate music degree.

The Study Room contains the bulk of the content relating to score preparation, technique, rehearsing and performing. At the core of the technique chapters is the ConductIT Workbook: a series of 49 short extracts designed to address specific aspects of technique such as beat patterns, dynamics, fermatas, speeding up and slowing down, phrasing, mixed meters, subdividing, aleatoric music, handling tricky transitions, and much more.

Each extract is arranged in 4 parts and is available in full score, piano score, and 13 different transpositions allowing it to be used by almost any conceivable combination of instruments. Each extract is discussed in context and with demo videos. This approach puts conducting actual musicians at the heart of technical development right from the very first lessons and provides highly practical resources for use in class situations and for personal practice.

The rehearsal chapters contain a wealth of information and advice about different situations and scenarios and how to go about making your musicians sound better. Even experienced professional conductors will find things here to plug gaps in their knowledge.

The Rehearsal Studio contains a series of case studies showing the rehearsal process for a variety of different types of projects. Due to the global pandemic this area of the site is a little behind schedule – it was a bit tricky to film large scale projects for the last couple of years! Already on the site are case studies for classical chamber orchestra, contemporary ensemble, choir, and a jazz-influenced crossover project. Coming soon are a wind band, a brass band, and a symphony orchestra.

The Careers Office aims to help students plan a route through their studies and how to begin and develop a career. There is advice about different approaches to studying and how that varies around the world; what the options are post-study; how to find engagements and attract management; how the 'business' works; and a series of 10 interviews with early-career conductors discussing their personal journeys. There are films of masterclasses with Sir Mark Elder, advice from other leading conductors, highly experienced orchestral players, and a range of managers and agents.

The Library is a place to find much of the material presented elsewhere on the site. For example, here you can download the complete ConductIT Workbook rather than the individual excerpts which appear in the Study Room.

Some facts & figures....

More than 200 separate web pages, 200+ specially created videos, over 1000 pdf downloads, more than 60 contributors.

Are you sure it doesn't cost anything?

Absolutely! Thanks to the funding we received from the EU's Erasmus+ programme, there are no charges for using the site – whether for individuals or institutions. All we ask is that if you use or distribute the material outside of the ConductIT website, you credit the project in an appropriate manner.

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