

iona
community



Work with the Iona Community

*Transforming lives to change
the world.*



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Iona Community Job Description

Job Title	Iona Abbey Musician
Reporting to	Abbey Warden
Salary Band	As residential post: Annual allowance of £9,350, all rent, bills and food included.
Type of Contract	Resident post – Fixed Term, 1 st February 2026 to 31 st December 2026
Location	Isle of Iona
Hours of Work	35 hours per week; with Common Life commitments in addition.
Common Life Accountability	Working for the Iona Community as part of the Resident Team is more than a job – it is a way of life. We live and work together as a community, committed to sharing a common life. This means that staff share in tending a home with one another, while also sharing daily tasks, worship and recreation with the guests who join us in community, and with each other. Living like this can be very rewarding. It can also be a very vulnerable and challenging experience, balancing our allocated job along with the shared “common life”. This life together is a commitment, or a covenant that is agreed, rather than a contract that is signed. It is this mixture of our daily work, with a commitment to the common life and the building, receiving and celebrating of community that makes working at our islands centres far more than a job; but a way of life.
Annual Leave	37 days for full-time staff. Pro-rata for part-time staff. Holiday/Annual Leave Entitlement runs from 1 January to 31 December each year and is inclusive of Public Holidays
Pension	Membership of the National Employment Savings Trust
Date of this Version	October 2025

Overview of the organisation

The Iona Community is an international, ecumenical Christian movement working for justice and peace, the rebuilding of community and the renewal of worship.

Our Community was founded in Glasgow, Scotland in 1938 by Rev George MacLeod, a visionary and social reformer.

The Iona Community is an ecumenical Christian movement seeking new ways of living the gospel in today's world through working for peace and social justice rebuilding community and in the renewal of worship.

Job Description

During the guest season, the Iona Community is responsible for twice daily services (usually in the Abbey church). There is no 'regular' congregation beyond the Abbey team - guests and members of the public join us at each service. Numbers vary but, during the summer, there are often over 200 people at Sunday morning services.

The main instrument in the Abbey church is a high-grade digital piano (there is no organ). Other instruments, including percussion, are frequently used by the Abbey team and guests, and a cappella singing is also an important part of the repertoire.

One aspect of the Community's witness is the way in which congregational song is prioritised, using materials from throughout the world as well as from our own resources within the Iona Community, and the more traditional church repertoire.

The musician is primarily involved in the preparation and delivery of music for services; they also offer a weekly 'Wee Sing' and other occasional programme sessions.

We aim to have a music volunteer throughout the season who will be supervised by the Musician. Members of the Abbey team may also be keen to play a variety of instruments, in addition to guests.

The prime role of the Musician is to:

- 1) represent the musical culture of the Iona Community, and to do so in conjunction with the Wild Goose Resource Group (WGRG) who are based in Glasgow.
- 2) provide a range of music, including congregational song, suitable for twice-daily services of public worship in the Abbey church, and to contribute to the guest programmes;

This post involves early and/or late shifts in keeping with the flow of life in the Abbey.

Main Responsibilities

1) Music for services

- a) Choose the songs for weekday morning services, bearing in mind any particular weeks/days we mark; for all other services, coordinate with the service leaders in choosing music, especially songs/hymns/chants, including *a cappella* singing. Music choices should introduce participants to the Iona Community's musical repertoire and ethos and challenge and expand their horizons. New musical material from sources in the UK and worldwide is also welcome.
- b) Teach songs that eg may be new, are in two or more parts, at the beginning of a service. Training will be provided in how the Iona Community does song teaching.
- c) Support the coordination of services, in liaison with the Warden, Sacristan and service leaders; we try not to print out too many songs but if a song sheet is needed, do this in liaison with the Administrator; collect sheets after the service, cataloguing and storing them for future use.
- d) Provide a range of music before and after services;
- e) Liaise with the WGRG and the Programme Coordinator regarding ideas and input for services and programme-related sessions; and about their participation in some weeks at the Abbey;

2) Musical support and encouragement

- a) Support and encourage guests, as well as members of the Abbey team, to participate musically, particularly in services, through singing (eg solo, small groups) and playing instruments, including percussion;
- b) Identify people who are keen to assist in musical leadership and practice with them. In general, enable people to 'find their musical voice' and fulfil their musical potential.

3) Programme sessions for guests

- a) In consultation with the Programme Coordinator, lead weekly 'wee sings' - teaching songs associated with the Iona Community, and global songs. Resources are provided.
- b) Initiate other musical activities according to your interest and skills;
- c) Liaise with the Programme Coordinator, and guest leaders, regarding any musical component in their sessions.

4) Musical resources

- a) Maintain the stock of musical resources, including instruments, books and printed music; indicate to the Warden any materials that need repaired or replaced, and new materials that would be beneficial to have available.

5) Admin and Management

- a) Train, support and supervise the music volunteer;
- b) In liaison with the Administrator, renew our annual copyright licences and make regular on-line reports as appropriate; when a song/music sheet is required, ensure copyright wording is included;
- c) Keep up-to-date with emails and other admin-related tasks;
- d) In liaison with the Operations Manager, maintain an accurate database of past Iona Abbey musicians, and other people who we might approach, to enable drawing on them for holiday/other cover, as needed;
- e) Monitor music expenditure and budget.

6) Other duties

- a) In liaison with Historic Environment Scotland and the Warden, occasionally play for 'external' services eg weddings;
- b) Especially over the winter months, when there are fewer services, help out in other departments;
- c) Undertake any other duties delegated by the Warden.

7) Duties Shared with Other Staff Members of the Abbey Team (for which training is given)

- a) Health & Safety compliance, Safeguarding, First Aider, Fire Officer
- b) Option of being on the rota to lead or back-mark the weekly pilgrimage
- c) Liaising with the Communications team to provide content (i.e. photos, videos or sound recordings)

Level of Autonomy and Decision Making

This post has considerable day-to-day autonomy and the post-holder can make decisions relating to their area of responsibility. Decisions that will have a wider impact will require to be referred to the Warden.

Supervision and Budget responsibility

Supervision of musician volunteer; responsibility for the Music budget.

Key Relationships

The main internal contacts of the post are:

Colleagues in the Abbey team especially the Warden and the Programme Coordinator
Colleagues on the mainland, especially WGRG

The main external contacts of the post are:

Guests, members of public, islanders, staff of Historic Environment Scotland (HES)

Personal Specifications

Essential

- a) Piano skills at minimum Grade 6 (Associate Board of the Royal Schools of Music) or international equivalent, though preferably Grade 7 or 8, subject to conversation and audition at interview
- b) Ability to use a variety of skills: singing, playing other musical instruments, using recordings and sound equipment, in order to engage people creatively through music, including in services
- c) Demonstrated experience as an accompanist, particularly on piano
- d) Good sight-reading skills e.g. able to accompany congregational songs at short notice.
- e) Experience and ability to confidently lead musical involvement and engage others musically, especially those with little music background, including teaching songs to large and small groups
- f) Familiarity with, or a keenness to become familiar with, the existing musical repertoire of the Iona Community
- g) A broad appreciation, and experience, of church music
- h) Awareness of, and sympathy with, the Iona Community's Christian commitment, purpose, values and concerns
- i) A strong commitment to sharing in the ministry of hospitality and the common life in the Abbey
- j) Ability to engage, communicate and work with people, including groups, from a range of ages, backgrounds, abilities, nationalities and languages
- k) Ability to work with the unexpected as well as the routine
- l) Experience of supervising and supporting people in their work, and ability to lead by example
- m) Commitment to reflective practice and ability to receive constructive feedback
- n) Be a team player and take a flexible approach to work; willingness to contribute to work in other departments including covering for colleagues, when necessary
- o) Organisational and computer experience
- p) Ability to cope with the physical and mental challenges of living in community on a remote Hebridean island

Desirable

- a) Previous experience of leading church music, ideally in an ecumenical environment
- b) Knowledge of the Iona Community's resources, including Wild Goose Resource Group's music and liturgy material
- c) Knowledge of world church music
- d) Experience of copyright usage and reporting
- e) Previous involvement in preparing and facilitating creative and inclusive worship
- f) Experience of Microsoft 365

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and Residential post-holder will need to be or to become a member of Scotland's Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme.

AGREEMENT

Job Holder's Signature

Date

Immediate Manager's Signature

Date



How to apply



Abbey Musician

Closing date: Sunday 30th November 2025

Interview date: week of 8th December

Please apply by email using the application form to outline your experience and suitability for the role.

Email: icrecruitment@iona.org.uk

The Iona Community, Suite 9, Fairfield, 1048 Govan Road, Glasgow, Scotland G51 4XS
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