



THE MUSICIANS'  
COMPANY

**TERENCE PAMPLIN AWARD  
FOR MUSICAL INSTRUMENT RESEARCH- up to £2500 in 2026**

**THE AWARD**

The Terence Pamplin Award is made each year to encourage excellence in research in the science and history of the development and construction of all acoustic musical instruments and their use, termed organology. It consists of a financial award and certificate confirming the award. In 2026 the amount of the award will be determined by the panel of judges appointed by Worshipful Company of Musicians and be not more than £2500. The award is organised and administered by the Worshipful Company of Musicians ('The Musicians' Company') through their Charitable Fund. The award may be presented at a Company event as the Court may decide.

**AIMS**

Within Western music there are many aspects of classical and folk music traditions that remain unresearched. More widely, ethnic musical traditions are under threat of extinction in many parts of the world. The award is designed to encourage research into early music instrument research and playing techniques of acoustic instruments within the main stream of Western musical tradition and oral traditions in world ethno-organology at any period of history, and record them before they are lost to scholarship for ever. The geographical scope of the award is global. The research project can include making, playing or visual/ video/ sound recording of acoustic musical instruments. The award specifically excludes electronic or computerised digital instruments and electrical amplification. The award will be made on the basis of a student's accomplishments and will be used to encourage further music instrument research by the award winner.

Previous Award Winners have used the award to provide an additional aspect to their research by making an instrument to test the methodology of an earlier well-known instrument maker; travel to measure and photograph instruments and/or analysis of original archive material/documents; acoustical analysis; application of research techniques eg use of a scanner to check the bone density and other aspects of medieval bone flutes and then making a modern copy. The judges give credit for research through making and/or applications across different academic disciplines. This particularly applies to established makers, restorers and conservators who are seeking to establish a research capability.

## **RULES FOR THE COMPETITION**

1. The competition is open to:
  - Undergraduates who are studying in a UK institution of higher education, or UK citizens studying in a European institution of higher education; graduates and post graduates should either have a first degree from a UK institution or be a student of musical instrument research at a higher degree or higher diploma level at a UK institution of higher education or be UK citizens studying in a European institution of higher education.
  - graduates and postgraduates within 5 -10 years of completion of their degree at a UK institution of higher education or further education who have been registered and academically supervised for their qualification at a UK institution or as UK citizens at a European institution.
  - Established Crafts persons who have made, restored, conserved acoustic instruments in their own or a partner's workshop and are seeking to develop their research capability at a UK institution of higher education or as UK citizens at a European institution of higher education. This rule applies to applicants of any nationality legally working full time in the UK and UK citizens working full time or part time in Europe. Photocopies of appropriate document should be attached to the application.
  - Persons who have undergone an apprenticeship in any discipline and now wish to extend their career into music instrument research and can provide evidence by video or sound recording of relevant musical ability or understanding at an advanced level.
2. The Competition is open to persons of any age and nationality.
3. The Worshipful Company of Musicians will determine whether a candidate has complied with the rules of the competition. It will appoint a panel of judges to determine the winner whose decision will be final and no discussion or correspondence will be entered into. The panel will initially consist of the Master or his nominee, and experts nominated by the Worshipful Company of Musicians.
4. The Worshipful Company of Musicians on the advice of the judges has the right to withhold any or all of the award should the standard be insufficiently high.
5. The language of the competition is English. All written submissions must be printed and signed with a statement that it is the person's own work and where appropriate full acknowledgement of any other sources.
6. Applications are invited from students at a UK institution of higher education or further education or societies working in this field in the UK which support the appropriate course, or UK citizens who are students at a European institution of higher education or further education. The competitor's academic supervisor should submit a written reference on behalf of the institution of higher education/society of the competitor's work

covering not more than one side of A4. The report should be on the institution/society's headed notepaper, and state the supervisor's academic or other status. The report should confirm the competitor's academic or other qualifications; the accuracy and the institutions /society's assessment of what the competitor has written or submitted in any other format including video or sound recording; and that the person is a suitable candidate for the award.

7. The competitor must submit

- A completed application form, obtainable from the Musicians' Company website <https://wcom.org.uk/awards/terence-pamplin-award/> or by emailing the Deputy Clerk at [assistant@wcom.org.uk](mailto:assistant@wcom.org.uk), to accompany each nomination stating the competitor's achievements and qualifications with particular reference to the competitor's current course or programme or research proposal.
- Either: an account of the competitor's previous research or experience in musical instrument making to include a synopsis or abstract of any report or dissertation and a description of how these were submitted and assessed, also a list of publications (if any). Technical drawings are welcomed.
- Or: a video recording of their making, repair and conservation work on acoustic instruments demonstrating their knowledge and advanced craft skills. It must be a video made by the applicant. Sound-only recordings are acceptable.
- A detailed costed statement of what the competitor wishes to do with the award money and how this will contribute to musical instrument research. This could include a cost statement of materials that are to be used for making an instrument for research purposes. Applications without a costed statement will not be considered.
- A project summary or plan of between 500 and 3000 words with a timetable as appropriate and any one, or all, or some combination of the following as deemed appropriate to the competitor's research: photographs of a musical instrument that they have made together with photocopies of technical drawings and technical specifications; an audio or video recording which supports their research in the area with an explanation why it does; music manuscript, which may be in any accepted format e.g. tablature or modern notation. Submitted material will only be returned on request at the competitor's expense. Nominated competitors, who have constructed a musical instrument, may be required to make arrangements for it to be seen by the judges specified by the Worshipful Company of Musicians who will take account of costs and practicalities of transportation.
- An undertaking that the competitor will within two years of the receipt of the award publish an account of their research in a book or appropriate learned journal or write a short report to the Musicians' Company, who may at their discretion publish it.
- The competitor should ensure that the supervisor or representative of their academic institution or other authority has submitted a reference by 31 July 2026. The judges may disregard applications where there is no reference. A customer's reference from a maker that the maker has made, conserved or repaired an instrument to a professional standard is acceptable provided the customer agrees to their details being recorded by the Company.
- At the end of the first year after receiving the award the applicant agrees to write a short letter to the Clerk of the Musicians' Company on not more than one side of A4 stating how the research has progressed and whether there have been any unexpected problems

8. Submissions must support the aims of the prize, as outlined above.
9. The Worshipful Company of Musicians will not accept any liability for loss or damage to musical instruments or any other materials submitted for the competition.

The closing date for the competition in 2026 will be 1200 **noon on 31 July 2026**. All entries must be sent to the Company's Office, preferably by email to [assistant@wcom.org.uk](mailto:assistant@wcom.org.uk) or alternatively, posted to The Deputy Clerk, The Worshipful Company of Musicians, 1 Speed Highwalk, Barbican, London EC2Y 8DX.

The Committee will answer queries submitted in writing by a UK institution of higher education regarding the eligibility and compliance with the rules of a particular research project.

The Worshipful Company of Musicians reserves the right to adjust and amend the rules for the competition. Rules for the competition can also be found on the Company's website at: <https://wcom.org.uk/awards/terence-pamplin-award/>

#### **TERENCE PAMPLIN – ORGANOLOGIST AND MUSICOLOGIST 1941 -2004**

Dr Terence Pamplin left school at the age of fifteen without any qualifications. At the same age he showed immense musical talents but these were not developed academically until relatively late. Whilst working full time and supporting a young family, he obtained a BA, a Diploma in Management Studies, LTCL Degree at Trinity College of Music and LRAM at the Royal Academy of Music and in 2000 his PhD from Kingston University with a thesis on his favourite instrument – the Baroque Baryton.

His career initially covered piano making, keyboard repair and conservation as well as academic research but expanded to cover stringed instruments and many other musical instruments world-wide.