

Queensland Symphony Orchestra – CEO statement

Queensland Symphony Orchestra (QSO) today announced that CEO Sophie Galaise would be leaving the company to join the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

QSO Chair Mr Greg Wanchap said Ms Galaise leaves the company in strong artistic and financial health – following a record-breaking season 2015, renewed and acclaimed musicality throughout the Orchestra, and with the imminent arrival of internationally acclaimed conductor Ms Alondra de la Parra as Music Director designate.

“We wish Sophie all the very, very best at MSO” he said. “The QSO is well into an era of renewed success at all levels. Sophie played a major role in reinvigorating the company and we thank her for this.”

Mr Wanchap said that under Sophie’s leadership, QSO has grown its revenue by more than \$2M, fundraising and sponsorship have seen a huge increase (more than 50%) and the orchestra’s annual reach has grown to more than 1.1 million.

QSO has built a reputation for staging record-breaking non-traditional blockbuster events such as *Journey through the Cosmos* with super star Brian Cox and holds the record for the largest and most financially successful *BBC Doctor Who Symphonic Spectacular*, attracting 9,000 people.

“QSO experienced record-breaking sales last year, reaching our first ever million dollar Maestro Series and selling out three *Bolero* events to enthusiastic audiences. Already, 2016 is exceeding expectations with subscription sales 12% ahead of last year,” he said.

Sophie spearheaded new initiatives with partners including BBC (QSO is performing at Melbourne Proms in April 2016), Foxtel Arts and diverse community groups as part of QSO’s WorldBeat and QSOCurrent series.

QSO now reaches out to more than 115 schools across the state, dedicating a third of its annual activities directly into regional Queensland.

During Sophie’s tenure, QSO has achieved artistic excellence on a global scale, including performances with Fabien Gabel, Shlomo Mintz, Mischa Maisky, Pinchas Zukerman and more recently with Maxim Vengerov at an extraordinary season finale concert and an outstanding performance of Mahler 6 under Simone Young last year.

The Orchestra has received offers to tour nationally and internationally, and is developing exciting collaborations with BBC World, the London Philharmonic Orchestra and other leading orchestras in Asia, North America and Europe.

The QSO board is committed to continuing to build on this success and will immediately commence a global search for its new CEO.

Ms Galaise said she will miss the QSO, a company which will now always have a special place in her heart.

“The last few years have been among the most fulfilling of my professional life. I am very proud of what the QSO has accomplished and have no doubt that the orchestra will thrive in the years to come under the artistic direction of Alondra de la Parra.

“Brisbane and Queensland is a very special place and being a part of this unique cultural environment has been a privilege and a pleasure I will always treasure,” she said.