Introduction

The Chicago Philharmonic Orchestra is a dynamic, nationally recognized, musician-led organization whose mission is to excite, engage, and transform diverse audiences through the beauty and power of music.

There is no other orchestra in the country with the organizational structure of the Chicago Philharmonic. Influenced in part by the governance models of the Berlin Philharmonic and London Symphony orchestras, we strive to impart an extraordinary level of ownership to our 200-plus musician members. The result is an orchestra of uncommon harmony, with tight bonds among staff, Board, and musicians.

Under the leadership of retiring Executive Director, Donna Milanovich, Artistic Director and Conductor, Scott Speck, and various governance committees comprising both musicians and community members, the Chicago Philharmonic has created a unique place in the region’s orchestra eco-system, reaching over 150,000 audience participants annually in the Chicago area through self-produced concerts, contractual performances, chamber events, and community engagement programs. The Chicago Philharmonic has given more than 600 performances over the past 25 years, including substantial long-running roles with the Joffrey Ballet and the Ravinia Festival.

The Chicago Philharmonic routinely performs symphonic concerts in venues such as Pick-Staiger Hall in Evanston, North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie, and Harris Theater for Music and Dance in Chicago. We have also performed at a variety of venues while on tour, including Lincoln Center’s Koch Hall in New York City, Ferro Pavilion in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and the Krzysztof Penderecki European Centre of Music in Luslawice, Poland. Our artistic relationships include the Ravinia Festival, Harris Theatre, Auditorium Theatre, Pitchfork Music Festival, Salute to Vienna at Symphony Center, Chicago Theatre, City Winery, and other outstanding dance and arts organizations.

Over the years, renowned conductors Zubin Mehta, Jesús López-Cobos, and Sir Andrew Davis have led The Chicago Philharmonic, and we have performed with a wide array of artists, including Joshua Bell, Jorge Osario, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Lady Gaga, Tony Bennett, and Johnny Mathis. Performances have ranged from Carmina Burana and The Rite of Spring to Michael Giacchino’s Coco to a world premiere by Augusta Read Thomas. Following our successful collaboration in World Music with artists in Poland, we are now planning trips to Cuba and China.

ED Role Description

Following three decades of substantial achievement, and with a view toward an exciting period of growth and expansion ahead, the Chicago Philharmonic is seeking to engage an Executive Director with a proven history as a creative, collaborative, seasoned arts professional. The successful candidate will have significant arts leadership and management experience including familiarity with strategic planning,
fundraising and development, artistic programming, performance production, personnel administration, and financial management.

**Leadership Toward Strategic Goals**

The Executive Director will be expected to lead the Chicago Philharmonic in the implementation of its expansion strategy, which involves:

1. Reaching the minds and hearts of our increasingly diverse and growing group of patrons and communities
2. Innovating new forms of expression and musical performance through the commission of new works by aspiring composers in residence
3. Continuing to build Chicago Philharmonic’s distinctive culture of inclusion so that musicians, staff and board ensure that the orchestra achieves its full potential as a creative, socially transformative force for musical performance art in Chicago and the Midwest Region

To accomplish these goals, the Executive Director will channel the leadership and creativity of Chicago Philharmonic’s accomplished musician members, the stewardship and guidance of the Board of Directors, and the commitment of the organization’s musician-populated governance committees and talented staff.

**Specific Responsibilities**

1. Represent Chicago Philharmonic to the public with energy, enthusiasm and vision
2. Ensure that all aspects of the organization and its operations run smoothly
3. Maintain open, creative and good-natured relationships with the organization’s musician members and committees
4. Develop a rolling three-year strategic plan together with the Board of Directors which builds on the organization’s many successes, its unique place in Chicago’s orchestral eco-system, and its opportunities for growth
5. Define and arrange artistic programming for upcoming seasons in collaboration with the Artistic Committee and the Artistic Director
6. Broaden the reach and visibility of the Chicago Philharmonic through ambitious marketing and community outreach
7. Serve as the organization’s chief fundraising officer, stewarding current donors and growing contributed revenue sources to continue the organization’s record of financial stability and to allow for further growth of the organization’s recently launched endowment fund
8. Ensure high-quality concert production by getting to know individual musicians and the ensemble as a whole through presence at rehearsals, concerts and community events
9. Maximize social equity and inclusion in all aspects of the organization’s efforts
10. Supervise the staff of the organization, including the Operations and Finance Director, the Director of Development, and the Director of Marketing
11. Work closely with the Board and participate in quarterly Board meetings as Executive Director and also as a Board director
12. Participate in and guide key Board governance committees which include musicians and community members of the Board
13. Develop an annual operating plan and report to the Board at each quarterly meeting on the status of the approved plan and key activities being implemented
14. Lead the organization through the final phase of the COVID-19 crisis and prepare for a return to normal concert activities in 2021-22
Qualifications

The successful candidate will likely have:

- A creative, entrepreneurial, hands-on attitude
- Significant personal artistic experience and approximately 5-10 years of management experience in a musical or performance arts organization or experience as a professional musician with substantial supplemental experience in business and management activities
- A deep understanding of the life challenges of a professional musician
- Proven leadership ability and future growth potential
- Demonstrated experience in or strong familiarity with event programming and production procedures, fundraising, marketing, public relations, and personnel administration
- Strategic thinking ability
- Clear results orientation and strong motivation to meet or exceed target goals
- Demonstrated financial management and budgeting skills experience
- An understanding of key issues and challenges shaping the orchestra and arts world
- A reputation for integrity, high energy engagement, and a strong work ethic

Compensation

The Chicago Philharmonic will offer a competitive salary and benefits package.

Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will likely have (1) significant personal musical experience, (2) a track record of producing high-quality events that address audience interests, (3) an ability to raise funds from individual and institutional donors and corporate sponsors, (4) an ability to align internal and external stakeholders around our mission and strategic goals. Personal artistic accomplishment will facilitate an understanding of the Society’s culture as a musician-governed organization and will inspire the confidence and trust of the Society’s musicians, enabling more effective strategic and artistic planning once in the role.

Staff Support

The Chicago Philharmonic Executive Director will be supported by a team of capable staff contributors, including a Director of Operations and Personnel, who leads finance and personnel management, and other directors who are responsible for development and marketing.

Applications

Please send a cover letter that outlines interest and qualifications, a resume, and a list of references to: search@chicagophilharmonic.org. (Microsoft Word or PDF only). Applications will be reviewed upon receipt and continue until the appropriate candidate is identified. Questions may be addressed to the Search Committee at the above e-mail (no calls, please). Thank you.

Employer Name: The Chicago Philharmonic Society

Job Title: Executive Director and Board Director

Website: https://www.chicagophilharmonic.org/

Employer Contact Information: search@chicagophilharmonic.org

The Chicago Philharmonic is an equal opportunity employer, and we provide the same opportunities for hiring, advancement, and benefits to everyone without discriminating due to age, sex or gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or nationality, religion, disability, and medical history.