

Position Opportunity

**Executive Director
Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra
Seattle, Washington**

The Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra invites applications and nominations for the position of Executive Director, available in early 2023.

The Organization
<http://www.syso.org>

Founded in 1942, Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra (SYSO) is one of the largest and most highly regarded youth orchestra training programs in North America. The organization creates access to music education for more than 1,800 young people each year and its membership reflects the rich diversity of the greater Seattle community. Through six youth orchestras, two summer festival programs, a conservatory program, and extensive partnerships with public schools and community groups, SYSO creates music engagement opportunities for more than 35,000 young musicians, family members, audience members, and patrons each year.

SYSO's mission is to harness the power of music education to provide young people with pathways to artistic excellence, intellectual development, and emotional growth. SYSO's vision is to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment for young people publicly performing in ensembles large and small throughout the greater Seattle area. SYSO envisions a youth orchestra community that advances equitable artistic practices, uplifts all musicians, and provides them with educational experiences connected to their lives and communities.

SYSO enjoys a prestigious reputation as a high caliber orchestra and counts many acclaimed professional musicians among its alumni, including three founding members of the Kronos Quartet. In addition to the Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra, SYSO includes five training orchestras: the Junior Symphony; the Debut Symphony; the Symphonette; the Prelude String Orchestra; and MY Southwest. SYSO's newest program, MY Southeast, is an orchestra designed for string and percussion students and is offered without fee to applicants in middle through high school.

In addition to the Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra and its training orchestras, SYSO provides a wide variety of other opportunities for young musicians. These programs include the SYSO Summer Music day camp and innovative public school partnerships such as the *Musical Pathways Project*, which provides equitable access to high-quality music instruction to youth from low-income households.

Advanced students can have an intensive musical experience in orchestra and chamber music during SYSO's nationally recognized two-week summer festival, Marrowstone Music. A merger with the Seattle Conservatory of Music now enables SYSO to encourage, guide, and prepare young musicians who aspire to professional careers.

SYSO is a unique and extraordinarily multifaceted organization. It is similar to a private school with a diverse parent and student base; it is an arts organization with earned income from ticket sales from concerts, events, and festivals; it is akin to a university with an extensive alumni and parent/grandparent network; and it is similar to a youth development organization with a focus on underserved populations.

By awarding more than \$100,000 in financial aid annually, SYSO ensures that every talented student from age seven to 22 is able to participate in the program that is right for them, regardless of the student's financial resources.

SYSO has an operating budget of \$2.2 million and is governed by a Board of 15 volunteers that includes professional musicians, educators, and community leaders. Additional support is provided by an active parent association. Juan Felipe Molano has served as Music Director of SYSO since 2019. The Executive Director and the Music Director lead a team of eight staff members, four conductors, and more than 30 music coaches.

The City

Nicknamed "The Emerald City," Seattle is surrounded with majestic mountains, sparkling bodies of water, and lush greenery year-round. Many say the region's verdant landscapes and plentiful rain are what drive the innovative spirit of this city. With music, art and culture, Fortune 500 companies, philanthropy, social justice, geo-political initiatives, education, food, coffee, public parks and spaces, engineering, architecture, ferries, island life, and conservation, Seattle continues to be at the epicenter of innovation. Both Forbes and AARP name Seattle one of the top three "Most Livable Large Cities in America." Seattle's diverse population of more than 4 million also ranked #2 among "The Most Literate Cities in the Country." All these qualities and assets make Seattle a great place to live, work, and visit.

Seattle is a city that highly values the intersectionality of the arts, culture, economy, and social impact. Arts and culture generate more than \$2.4 billion in economic activity in the state of Washington every year and create more than 35,000 jobs, many of them in Seattle. For more than 80 years, SYSO has been a part of the fabric of the city.

The Position

The Executive Director and the Music Director are co-leaders of the organization, ensuring SYSO's artistic, educational, organizational, and financial success. The Executive Director (ED) is the chief administrative officer and reports to the Board of Directors. The ED is responsible and accountable for the leadership and management of the organization's finances and operations. The ED works with the Board and the Music Director to set strategic priorities and ensure the operational success of artistic and educational programming. The ED develops and implements a budget for Board approval and with the Board ensures that the organization has the resources needed to succeed within that budget.

The Executive Director partners with the Music Director in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of SYSO's programs and services and in providing operational support to coaches, music staff, and guest artists. The ED fosters an environment that allows the Music Director and artistic staff to do their best work and to provide excellent music education and experiences to all participants in SYSO's programs.

The Executive Director oversees SYSO's comprehensive development program in order to achieve revenue growth and sustainability to support program operations, to maintain strong cash reserves, and to build the Board-designated endowment fund. The ED supervises the Director of Development and works with the Development Committee of the Board to establish fundraising and cultivation strategies that advance SYSO's strategic priorities. In partnership with the Board, Music Director, Development Director, and key stakeholders, the ED works to grow SYSO's donor base through direct cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of key donors.

The Executive Director recruits, supervises, motivates, and evaluates a high-caliber administrative staff, ensuring that the hiring and personnel policies are consistent with SYSO's organization-wide

commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The ED develops and implements annual operating plans to achieve the goals and objectives identified in SYSO's strategic plan. The ED ensures that SYSO's technological infrastructure meets the operating needs of the organization.

The Executive Director is a spokesperson and advocate for SYSO throughout the Seattle community. The ED represents SYSO with local and state government, school boards, community organizations, and other arts and cultural organizations throughout the area. The Executive Director is an active participant in the life of the greater Seattle community.

Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will be a visionary leader with a deep commitment to music education, substantive experience working with talented young people, and a proven record of success as senior executive of a not-for-profit music or arts organization. The candidate will have a strong working knowledge of music, repertoire, concert production, and orchestra operation. Experience as a performing musician, though not required, would be an asset.

The candidate will have demonstrated their commitment to the principals of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and have successful experience implementing programs that ensure DEIB and anti-racism goals are achieved across the organization.

The successful candidate will have excellent financial management skills with the demonstrated ability to develop, manage, and balance annual operating budgets. The candidate will be an enthusiastic fundraiser who has had successful experience achieving or exceeding goals for foundation grants, annual fund, and endowment campaigns, corporate sponsorships, and special project fundraising.

The successful candidate will be an advocate for the value and importance of music education for all young people. The candidate will be able to speak and write persuasively about SYSO. The candidate will have experience guiding and mentoring young musicians.

The successful candidate will have strong interpersonal skills. The candidate will have experience working with a volunteer Board of Trustees and recruiting volunteer leadership. The successful candidate will have excellent supervisory skills, the ability to foster teamwork, and the willingness to nurture and develop staff. The candidate will be a strategic thinker, a superb listener, and a skilled communicator.

The successful candidate will be energetic, optimistic, and curious. The candidate will be a mature leader with integrity, high ethical standards, and a strong commitment to transparency. The candidate will welcome the opportunity to provide leadership to an outstanding youth orchestra program.

This is a full-time position that requires attendance at weekend and evening rehearsals, concerts, and events.

Compensation

The salary range for this position is \$115,000 to \$130,000 depending on qualifications and experience. SYSO offers a benefit package that includes full healthcare coverage, paid vacation, and a matching retirement fund contribution.

Applications

The Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in all facets of the organization. The Search Committee seeks to develop a diverse candidate pool and welcomes nominations and applications from all qualified candidates regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or national origin.

Applicants are asked to prepare a cover letter that describes your specific interest in the Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra and outlines your qualifications for the position. Submit with a resume and contact information for at least three professional references. Electronic submissions are requested. All applications will be treated as confidential and references will not be contacted without the candidate's knowledge and agreement.

Please send materials to:

Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra – Executive Director
c/o Catherine French Group
2500 Q Street NW, Suite 623
Washington, DC 20007
applications@catherinefrenchgroup.com

Please submit material in Adobe PDF or Microsoft Word format