

Position Title: Development Director

Organization: Dallas Chamber Symphony
Posted: September 1, 2026 (open until filled)
Reports to: Dr. Richard McKay, Executive Director
Location: Dallas, Texas (In-Person/Hybrid)
Type: Full-time, salaried
Website: dcsymphony.org



Institutional Overview

Founded in 2011, the Dallas Chamber Symphony (DCS) is a professional orchestra and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to engaging community audiences and enriching lives through the discovery, creation, exploration, and enjoyment of great music. Each year, DCS reaches a diverse audience of more than 60,000 people through its subscription season, acclaimed neighborhood outreach concerts, and comprehensive youth education programs. Subscription performances are presented at Moody Performance Hall in the heart of the Dallas Arts District.

Under the leadership of Music Director and Conductor Richard McKay, DCS has established itself as a distinctive and increasingly prominent voice in Dallas's performing arts community. The orchestra is recognized for musical excellence, imaginative programming, and pioneering multidisciplinary collaborations that expand the possibilities of the classical concert experience.

At the heart of DCS's artistic mission is the chamber orchestra repertoire, with a particular focus on works written for ensembles of fewer than 50 musicians. The organization has distinguished itself through consistently strong attendance, critical acclaim for its performances and internationally distributed recordings, and robust earned revenue from ticket sales that provides substantial support for its operations.

Context & Role Summary

The ideal candidate will be action-oriented, entrepreneurial, and highly self-directed, with exceptional skills in relationship building, public speaking, writing, and organizational diplomacy. DCS seeks a builder: someone capable not only of raising funds, but of developing the systems, strategies, relationships, and people necessary to create an increasingly sophisticated and productive development operation. As the organization grows, the Director will be expected to help build the development team, recruit and develop talented staff, delegate effectively, and ultimately lead and manage a high-performing fundraising department.

The successful candidate will be comfortable working toward ambitious and measurable fundraising goals. As a general benchmark, DCS expects the Director to develop sufficient fundraising productivity to generate contributed revenue approximating the cost of the position by around the second year, growing to two to three times that amount, or more, annually by approximately the third year, and continuing to increase as the organization's fundraising capacity expands.

Strong proficiency with contemporary technology, including the effective use of artificial intelligence tools for prospect research, writing, analysis, communications, and productivity, is required. Experience building or significantly expanding a sophisticated, high-performing fundraising operation within an arts organization, cultural institution, or similarly mission-driven organization is highly desirable.

Key Responsibilities

- Oversee all aspects of the orchestra's fundraising activities, including foundation and government relations, major gifts, corporate giving and sponsorships, special events, annual campaigns, planned giving, capital campaigns, and endowments.

- Fully embrace the Dallas Chamber Symphony’s mission, communicate persuasively the organization’s history and innovative vision, and articulate the case for support with authority, conviction, and urgency.
- Develop and implement comprehensive fundraising strategies to achieve annual contributed revenue goals while strengthening the organization’s long-term financial sustainability.
- Lead and continually strengthen the identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of new, current, and lapsed donors across individual and institutional sources of support.
- Develop and implement strategies to increase donor engagement and giving through direct mail, online giving, cultivation events, memberships, benefit packages, and other fundraising initiatives.
- Collaborate with marketing and communications colleagues to ensure consistent and compelling messaging in support of fundraising priorities, leveraging a variety of channels and platforms to advance development initiatives.
- Cultivate and manage a portfolio of current and prospective donors through personalized outreach, meetings, invitations, events, and ongoing communication, fostering strong relationships and sustained philanthropic engagement.
- Collaborate closely with the Board of Directors, Executive Director, and other key personnel to leverage their relationships, expertise, and resources in support of fundraising and donor engagement.
- Prepare and deliver compelling proposals, presentations, and other fundraising materials that effectively communicate the organization’s mission, programs, priorities, and case for support to donors, prospects, and board members.
- Maintain accurate and timely records of donations, pledges, sponsorships, donor activity, and other pertinent transactions in the organization’s database. As necessary, process gifts and payments, issue acknowledgements, and ensure fulfillment of associated benefits and deliverables.
- Ensure fundraising activities comply with applicable regulations, professional standards, and ethical practices governing philanthropy and sponsorships.
- Prepare regular reports for the board of directors on fundraising progress, goals, and benchmarks, and develop meaningful performance indicators for senior leadership and the Board of Directors.
- Attend the orchestra’s subscription concerts and related donor and social events as an active representative of the organization.
- Represent the Dallas Chamber Symphony at luncheons, conferences, community gatherings, and other networking events, cultivating relationships and strengthening the orchestra’s visibility and reputation throughout the Dallas community.

Qualifications

- Bachelor’s degree required; master’s degree preferred.
- Seven years of experience in development or a related field desired, with a demonstrated record of securing major gifts and cultivating donor relationships across a broad range of sources, including individuals, businesses and corporations, foundations, government agencies, and board members.
- Demonstrated success developing and implementing fundraising strategies, achieving revenue goals, and managing annual, special, and capital campaigns.
- Strong familiarity with the Dallas-area philanthropic community and an established network of relationships among its donors, philanthropic leaders, foundations, corporations, family offices, civic organizations, and other key participants. The successful candidate should bring an existing understanding of the individuals and institutions that shape philanthropy in Dallas and the ability to engage those relationships on behalf of DCS.
- Credible knowledge of classical music, a genuine passion for the art form, and a strong commitment to advancing the Dallas Chamber Symphony’s mission, history, and reputation for professionalism.
- Strong leadership, communication, and management skills, with the ability to build and lead a development team, collaborate effectively with colleagues and stakeholders, and inspire others to support the organization’s mission.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a demonstrated ability to build rapport and trusted relationships with donors, prospects, volunteers, board members, musicians, community partners, and staff.

- A proactive and persistent approach to prospect development, with demonstrated comfort making cold calls, initiating outreach, prospecting for new donors, securing introductions and meetings, and breaking through to individuals and organizations with whom no prior relationship exists.
- Strong business acumen, technological fluency, and a keen interest in emerging business tools and innovation. Demonstrated proficiency with artificial intelligence tools, including their effective use for research, prospecting, writing, analysis, communications, and productivity, is required.
- Fluency in reading and interpreting financial statements, with the ability to identify, analyze, and communicate relevant financial information.
- Proficiency with donor management systems and business productivity platforms, including Microsoft Office, Google Workspace, and CRM systems such as LEAP/PatronManager, Tessitura, Salesforce, or similar platforms.
- Proficiency with graphic design tools such as Adobe InDesign or Canva, together with a strong sense of brand and visual presentation, including typography, layout, and color, is desirable.
- Thorough knowledge of fundraising best practices, including applicable nonprofit tax requirements, donor disclosures, and ethical standards.
- Knowledge of moves management strategies, with an emphasis on maintaining accurate, disciplined, and actionable donor data.
- Flexibility to work evenings and weekends as necessary for concerts, special events, donor meetings, and other organizational activities.

Compensation

Competitive salary starting at \$120,000, commensurate with experience, with additional performance-based bonus opportunities structured in accordance with AFP guidelines. The organization provides employer-paid healthcare coverage, with additional coverage options available.

How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit a résumé and cover letter to Barbara Vance at search@dcsymphony.org. Please include **“Development Director Application”** in the subject line. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled. A background check will be required prior to employment.

The Dallas Chamber Symphony is an equal opportunity employer.