



South Bend Symphony Orchestra

Executive Director

Organization

The South Bend Symphony Orchestra (the Symphony) has been a cultural cornerstone of Northern Indiana for over nine decades. With a mission to inspire, entertain, and connect people with the transformative power of orchestral music, the Symphony is committed to artistry of the highest quality, educational outreach, and community engagement while being a vital and unifying force for all.

Through its programming and strategic partnerships, the Symphony presents a broad range of musical voices and traditions. Recent highlights include guest appearances by cellists Yo Yo Ma and Joshua Roman, French horn player Sarah Willis, and the Silk Road Ensemble. Programs have also featured the world premiere of Anna Clyne's *Quarter Days* and the U.S. premiere of excerpts from Malek Jandali's *Symphony No. 6, "The Desert Rose"*. Audiences enjoy a rich variety of music ranging from such demanding works as Gustav Mahler's Fifth Symphony and Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* to tributes to Aretha Franklin and 1980s pop music.

In recent years, the Symphony has placed a greater emphasis on showcasing works by historically underrepresented composers, ensuring a more inclusive reflection of the rich tapestry of orchestral music. In April 2022, the Symphony presented its first concert featuring an entire program of works by Black composers, including Florence Price, Quinn Mason, and William Levi Dawson. Under the leadership of Grammy-nominated Music Director Alastair Willis since 2016, the Symphony has gained national recognition and in 2023, advanced from Group Five to Group Four in The League of American Orchestras national rankings.

The Symphony also takes pride in its community partnerships. In collaboration with Southold Dance Theater, it presents an annual *Nutcracker* with live music. With South Bend Lyric Opera, it has performed *La Bohème* and *Tosca*. Other offerings with wide appeal include an annual Día de los Muertos concert, a celebration of the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., and an outdoor Patriotic Pops concert on July 4 at Four Winds baseball field. The Symphony has partnered with Shakespeare at Notre Dame to perform an evening of music inspired by his plays. A production of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* brought together talented artists from St. Mary's College, the South Bend Chamber Singers, and Notre Dame's Glee Club and Chorale. Symphony musicians also serve on the faculty of Indiana University South Bend and teach at summer camps in the area.

The Symphony is also dedicated to expanding its reach and fostering meaningful connections with the diverse communities it serves. Its 65 talented musicians are drawn from throughout the region and are eager to connect with audiences. The Symphony-to-Go program brings music directly to schools, senior centers, libraries, and civic organizations, delivering interactive, educational performances across the region. Three ensembles perform 63 free chamber music performances each year, and the Shein Trust Community Series promotes educational and family friendly shows for everyone with free performances and events that serve over 10,000 students annually. The Symphony is proud of its home in the 2564-seat Morris Performing Arts Center and appreciates being able to perform regularly in the 840-seat Leighton Concert Hall at the University of Notre Dame. Musicians and the public alike praise Music Director Willis's ability to engage with audiences.

In addition to artistic excellence and community partnerships, the Symphony is distinguished by its strong financial position and the collaborative engagement between its administrative staff and Board of Directors. The annual operating budget for the Symphony is approximately \$2.5 million and represents a 25% increase since FY22. The Symphony maintains strong annual giving, sponsorship, and grant programs that support nearly 55% of the budget. Distributions from the Symphony's \$10.5 million endowment provide approximately 30% of the operating budget, while subscriptions and ticket sales support the remainder. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, the annual revenue for the Symphony was \$2.85 million, with \$1.6 million from contributions, gifts, and grants. For the fiscal year ending June 2025, annual revenues are projected to be \$2.5 million, with approximately \$1.2 million from contributions, gifts, and grants, and the remainder from ticket sales, investments, and other earned revenue. In partnership with 12 administrative staff members, the Symphony is governed by a 22-member Board of Directors led by President Marvin V. Curtis, Ph.D. and Vice President Susan Ohmer, Ph.D.

Community

Located less than an hour from Lake Michigan and 90 miles east of Chicago, South Bend is a vibrant community with an affordable cost of living, diverse neighborhoods, and excellent schools. The city boasts a dynamic intellectual and cultural environment, attracting both residents and visitors with its theaters, museums, and music venues. Culturally, residents enjoy the South Bend Civic Theater, The History and Studebaker Museums, and the Raclin Murphy and South Bend Museums of Art.

South Bend's revitalized downtown features an array of dining, shopping, and entertainment options, making it an exciting and welcoming place to live and work. The area also offers a range of outdoor recreational opportunities, including an extensive network of parks and hiking trails, activities along the St. Joseph River, and the Potawatomi Zoo. Local fans support strong youth sports programs and nationally ranked collegiate athletic teams at the University of Notre Dame.

South Bend's population is approximately 58% White, 26% Black or African American, 16% Hispanic or Latino, 2% Asian, and 5% identifying as multiracial or another race. According to *U.S. News and World Report*, the area ranks among the top 25 places to live in the U.S.

Sources: visitsouthbend.com; southbendin.gov; censusreporter.org; realestate.usnews.com

Position Summary

The Executive Director will oversee all business aspects of the Symphony, including financial management, fundraising, marketing, audience development, labor relations, and organizational administration. Reporting to the Board of Directors and working in partnership with the Music Director, they will provide strategic leadership to advance the Symphony's artistic, educational, and community engagement initiatives. By building strong relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders and serving as a champion for the musicians, the Executive Director will foster an inclusive and collaborative work culture.

Role and Responsibilities

Strategic Vision and Organizational Effectiveness

- Align artistic, educational, and community engagement initiatives with financial sustainability in collaboration with key stakeholders.
- Implement a comprehensive and long-term institutional vision in partnership with the Music Director, Board, and staff.
- Maintain strong relationships with the Board, Music Director, staff, musicians, and volunteers through open and transparent communication.
- Assist Board committees in developing and implementing their goals and objectives, coordinating closely with appropriate staff liaisons.
- Develop diverse staff capabilities, creating an organizational culture to foster a motivated, self-sufficient, high-performing team.
- Embrace other strategic vision and organizational effectiveness responsibilities, as needed.

Financial Oversight and Revenue Enhancement

- Oversee budgeting, financial planning, and cash flow management, ensuring fiscal responsibility and transparency, and provide regular and clear updates to the Board and funders.
- Lead operational planning to ensure the effective use of financial resources and institutional efficiency.
- Manage contractual negotiations with the Musicians' Union, guest artists, vendors, and strategic partners, ensuring both financial prudence and artistic excellence.
- Advance marketing and public relations programs that enhance the Symphony's visibility and reputation.
- Drive fundraising and revenue-generating strategies by collaborating with the Board and staff to maximize contributed and earned revenue.
- Embrace other financial oversight and revenue enhancement responsibilities, as needed.

Community Leadership and Educational Engagement

- Champion the development of artistic and educational programs through creating strategic partnerships that embrace the diverse needs of the region and advance the Symphony's education and community initiatives.

- Serve as a primary spokesperson alongside the Music Director and Board President, representing the organization in the media and at public speaking engagements.
- Advocate for the value of orchestral music and musicians in our community.
- Cultivate relationships with city leaders, other arts organizations, and public agencies to enhance the Symphony's reputation and impact.
- Assist the Board in recruiting prospective Board members who can enhance the Symphony's efforts while educating and empowering Board members to serve as effective ambassadors.
- Embrace other community leadership and educational engagement responsibilities, as needed.

Traits and Characteristics

The Executive Director will be an effective communicator and engaged listener who fosters trust and transparency across all levels of the organization. With a passion for the arts and community engagement, they will be adept at establishing strong relationships with audiences, donors, and civic partners. This individual will inspire confidence and enthusiasm among staff, musicians, board members, donors, and the broader South Bend community. They will exhibit a spirit of curiosity about new trends in arts organizations and remain flexible when confronted with challenges.

Other key competencies include:

- **Personal Accountability and Diplomacy** – The ability to be answerable for personal actions while effectively and tactfully handling difficult or sensitive issues.
- **Leadership and Interpersonal Skills** – The capacity to organize and influence people to believe in a vision, creating a sense of purpose and direction while effectively communicating, building rapport, and relating well to all kinds of people.
- **Time and Priority Management** – The dexterity to prioritize and complete tasks to deliver desired outcomes within allotted time frames.
- **Customer Focus and Goal Orientation** – The acumen to anticipate, meet, and/or exceed customer needs, wants, and expectations.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will possess senior management experience and a strong ability to think strategically and creatively in order to continue the Symphony's forward trajectory in collaboration with Music Director Alastair Willis. The candidate shall have a proven record of fiscal accountability, including fundraising and development, while building, fostering, and sustaining meaningful relationships with donors, patrons, and community partners. Exceptional communication skills tailored to the Symphony's unique environment are critical to success. Prior leadership at an orchestra or performing arts organization is preferred, but applications are welcome from candidates in other sectors.

Compensation and Benefits

The South Bend Symphony Orchestra offers a competitive and equitable compensation and benefits package, including an annual salary range of \$120,000 to \$130,000, with an opportunity to earn an annual performance-based bonus. Benefits include paid time off and holiday pay, health insurance that includes vision and dental coverage, and a voluntary 401K retirement plan with a company matching contribution of 3%. A relocation package is also available if the candidate is not locally based.

Applications and Inquiries

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred), please click [here](#) or visit artsconsulting.com/opensearches. For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

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The South Bend Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors commits to using its financial resources to create a more diverse and vibrant musical experience for its community.