



## Organization

The Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (BYSO) is one of the most prestigious youth orchestras in the nation. A nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming young lives through exceptional classical music education, BYSO offers world-class training and performance opportunities for nearly 600 musicians, grades four to 18, from Greater Boston and throughout New England. BYSO's programs include three full symphonic orchestras, two string training orchestras, chamber ensembles, a preparatory wind ensemble, and the nationally acclaimed Intensive Community Program (ICP). ICP is a training program that provides rigorous music instruction to students from underrepresented communities with a 10-year pathway to artistic mastery through weekly lessons, instrument access, and financial aid. ICP students spend an average of 10 years with BYSO, and 95% of them audition into one of BYSO's top two ensembles. All ICP graduates go on to enroll in a 4-year college or university. This commitment to access and equity has been central to BYSO's mission since its inception, ensuring that high-quality classical music experiences are available to all.



Photo Credits: Michael J. Lutch

BYSO is one of the only youth orchestras in the world to present a full-length opera production every year as an integral part of its season. Since 2008, the opera program has provided young musicians in the Boston Youth Symphony (BYS, the top orchestra) an invaluable musical and intellectual experience in the training, understanding, and appreciation of the full range of classical repertoire. Lead roles are sung by top international artists, and the 1000+ seat performance venue sells out every year. BYSO has also performed in iconic venues such as Boston Symphony Hall and other significant cultural venues in Boston and Europe over the last 67 years, including international stages like the Mozarteum in Salzburg and Vienna's Stephansdom.

Founded in 1958, BYSO has grown into a global leader in classical music education. The 2024 opening of the BYSO Youth Center for Music (YCM) marks a transformative milestone, providing the first permanent home for its programs and advancing its mission. YCM, located at 235 Huntington Avenue, is a beacon of Boston's commitment to the arts and children, offering state-of-the-art facilities and expanded rehearsal spaces. The development of YCM is being executed in two phases, each designed to address critical needs and expand BYSO's reach.

### Phase One (2020–2024): Establishing a Permanent Home

Phase One focused on securing BYSO's future by acquiring a long-term lease for 235 Huntington Avenue, an iconic building in the Back Bay neighborhood. Phase One successfully concluded by:

- Establishing BYSO's home on the highly visible, historic landmark plaza, across from Symphony Hall.
- Creating a permanent home for the ICP by housing its full programs, including weekly lessons and ensembles.
- Providing BYSO with additional rehearsal space for its growing orchestras, thereby alleviating the need for more practice space under its current partnership with Boston University.
- Expanding educational opportunities and weekday programming for all students.
- With a total cost of \$26 million, raised by October 2024, Phase One represents a significant achievement in BYSO's history, establishing the foundation for an ambitious future vision.



## Phase Two (by 2031): Expanding for the Future

Phase Two will build on the success of Phase One by addressing BYSO's long-term needs and aspirations. Plans include a three-story addition to the existing building, further renovations to YCM to enhance functionality, and a substantial expansion of the endowment.

Key goals include:

- Centralizing programming at the YCM, eliminating reliance on Boston University facilities.
- Expanding ICP by 100% over 10 years to 200 students.
- Adding new orchestras and ensembles to meet demand for BYSO programs.
- Growing weekday programming for BYSO students and the broader Boston community.
- Creating meaningful partnerships with other Boston organizations to enhance the lives of children and families through the power of music.



## The BYSO Team and Financial Overview

Federico Cortese assumed the post of Music Director of the BYSO in 1999. He has conducted symphony and opera orchestras throughout the United States, Australia, China, and Europe. He is also the Music Director of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra and Senior Lecturer on Music at Harvard University. From 1998–2002 he served as Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Seiji Ozawa.



In January 2025, BYSO announced the retirement of its current President & CEO, Catherine Weiskel, after 28 years of extraordinary service and leadership. Catherine has been a driving force behind the organization's remarkable growth and impact. In partnership with Music Director Federico Cortese, the organization significantly increased the number and diversity of children involved, expanded its annual operating budget, and established itself as a cornerstone of music education in Boston and beyond.

BYSO has a 27-member Board of Directors, led by Margaret Chen, as well as an Advisory Board and BYSO Council. The President & CEO oversees approximately 18 administrative staff and the Music Director supervises eight artistic team members.

BYSO values fiscal sustainability. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, BYSO anticipates total revenues of approximately \$5.1 million with \$3.2 million from program services and \$1.9 million from contributions and grants. BYSO is grateful to the generosity of its many donors and has a restricted endowment that exceeds \$13 million, plus cash reserves in preparation for a sizable Phase Two integrated capital, endowment, and operating campaign.

## Community

Home to more than 4.9 million people, the City of Boston and the Boston-Cambridge-Newton metropolitan area are New England's economic and cultural hub. Greater Boston is the 11<sup>th</sup> largest metropolitan area in the United States. The area has a vibrant post-secondary population with more than 200,000 students and an exciting blend of cultures. The region has become a hub for technological innovation. Boston's comprehensive public transportation system (MBTA) links Downtown Boston and Logan Airport, which are in close proximity to one another.

The region is recognized for the strength and international reach of its education, health, and technology sectors. The area attracts dedicated faculty and ambitious students who choose to study in one of its many outstanding higher educational institutions. Over 50 colleges and universities are located within the Greater Boston area. Quality of life is anchored by a vibrant arts and cultural sector with world-renowned museums, orchestras, performing arts organizations, historic sites, regional cultural centers, emerging and experimental performing and visual arts

entities, and multi-disciplinary cultural heritage organizations. Individual artists and creatives from all disciplines and genres are active contributors to the region's vibrant arts sector.

Sources: censusreporter.org; pluralism.org; visitboston.org

## Position Summary

The President & CEO will partner with the Music Director in a co-equal reporting relationship to the Board of Directors to guide BYSO into a pivotal new chapter. Together, they will advance BYSO's strategic vision to fulfill its educational and artistic mission while significantly enhancing its presence in Boston and beyond. Building on the success of Phase One, the President & CEO will play a key role in ensuring the success of Phase Two, an ambitious expansion designed to amplify BYSO's impact and reach. As a result, this position is a career-defining opportunity to collaborate with an innovative and visionary Music Director, engage with a vibrant community of young musicians and their families, lead a dedicated and experienced senior staff, and work with a well-structured and engaged Board, all of whom deeply value BYSO's commitment to children and musical excellence.

## Role and Responsibilities

### Advancing Artistic Goals and Financial Growth

- Partner with the Music Director to ensure sustainability of BYSO's high quality programs and plan collaboratively for the organization's future expansion and growth.
- Engage with the advancement (fundraising) and artistic teams, Board, and staff to identify donor prospects, cultivate relationships, and amplify donor engagement opportunities to increase financial support for BYSO.
- Develop with the advancement team an integrated capital, endowment, and operating campaign to achieve Phase Two's financial and timing goals.
- Integrate with the marketing team to expand BYSO's public presence, communicate program quality, and highlight its impact on BYSO musicians and families, the City of Boston, and the broader community.
- Oversee and monitor operating and capital budgets with the Director of Finance and Chief Operating Officer to ensure short-term financial results and long-term viability.

### Shaping Strategy and Strengthening Governance

- Provide leadership with the Music Director, Board, and staff to amplify programs, evolve strategic direction, and differentiate BYSO in a robust music education market.
- Collaborate with Board leadership to identify, cultivate, and recruit new board members; leverage and engage existing members; and plan for long-term succession.
- Support Board committees and empower staff to work collaboratively toward organizational goals.
- Foster a culture of transparency, communication, and collaboration across the Board, Music Director, and staff.

### Managing the Fiscal, Operational, and Administrative Team

- Oversee and monitor annual and multi-year operating budgets and report to the Board to ensure financial sustainability and long-term viability.
- Prepare a capital and endowment funding plan with the Board, Capital Campaign Committee, and advancement (fundraising) staff to launch the next stage of BYSO's comprehensive campaign.
- Lead, mentor, and manage an administrative staff by fostering trust, promoting cooperation, and developing camaraderie among the artistic and management teams.
- Refine and enhance with relevant staff the opportunities for earned income from registrations, rentals, strategic partnerships, and ancillary revenue streams.

## Traits and Characteristics

The President & CEO will be a dynamic and collaborative leader, deeply aligned with the core mission, vision, and values of BYSO. They will thrive in actively engaging with children, families, donors, and community leaders to champion BYSO's mission and amplify its visibility. As a people-oriented leader, the President & CEO will embrace a role that demands high levels of interaction, trust, and connection, both internally and externally. They will possess a keen understanding of the financial and fundraising needs of a growing, entrepreneurial organization, and will bring the strategic acumen necessary to evolve BYSO's services and business model. With exceptional time and priority management skills, they will navigate multiple projects and conversations, balancing organizational demands with stakeholder engagement to ensure BYSO's continued growth and success.

Other key competencies include:

- **Leadership and Flexibility** – The ability to inspire, build trust, and lead with confidence while collaborating with others to identify challenges, overcome hurdles, set objectives, and reach common goals.
- **Interpersonal Skills and Diplomacy** – The flexibility to anticipate, meet, and exceed the needs of many parties while listening actively and respectfully, building rapport, communicating transparently, and relating well to an array of unique internal and external constituencies, while facilitating mutually beneficial outcomes.
- **Student, Parent, and Donor Focus** – The capability to organize and inspire students, parents, donors, Board, staff, and community while anticipating, meeting, and exceeding their needs and expectations.
- **Time, Priority, and Project Management** – The dexterity to manage, prioritize, and complete multiple complex tasks, mobilize wide-ranging resources, and deliver desired outcomes within allotted time frames.
- **Professional and Personal Accountability** – The integrity to be answerable for personal and professional actions while readily modifying and adapting to change with resilience, flexibility, and humility.

## Qualifications

At least seven to nine years of progressive senior leadership experience and proven success in nonprofit management, education, creative industries, or a related field is required. Financial and operational acumen with demonstrated accomplishments in capital, operating, and endowment fundraising is needed. A deep appreciation, understanding, and passion for arts education is expected. Experience leading a knowledgeable, committed, and forward-thinking team with a transparent communication style is critical. Public visibility as a primary spokesperson who has represented an organization to a range of stakeholders is helpful. A candidate who does not meet all the qualifications but possesses transferable or equivalent skills, experience, or education is encouraged to inquire or apply and to highlight those areas.

## Compensation and Benefits

BYSO provides a competitive and equitable compensation package with an estimated salary of at least \$200,000. Benefits include subsidized health, dental, and vision insurances; paid time off and holidays; and Massachusetts Paid Family Medical Leave, among others. Employees may also elect a Flexible Spending Account; life insurance; short- and long-term disability insurances; pet and identity protection plans; and other benefits as available through BYSO's professional employer organization.

## 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](http://artsconsulting.com/opensearches). For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

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