



columbus symphony

Director of Individual Giving
Position Announcement





About The Columbus Symphony

The Columbus Symphony has served as central Ohio's flagship music organization since 1951, enriching a growing and increasingly diverse metropolitan region through artistic excellence, innovative programming, and meaningful community engagement. Guided by Music Director Rossen Milanov, the Symphony presents performances that balance classical tradition with contemporary relevance, engaging audiences across genres and generations.

Programming is structured across four distinct series: Masterworks, Pops, Picnic with the Pops, and Education and Community Engagement. This approach allows the Symphony to serve loyal subscribers while continuing to expand its reach to new and younger audiences. From performances at the historic Ohio Theatre to large-scale summer concerts and community initiatives, the Symphony maintains a strong and visible presence throughout the region.

Beyond the concert hall, the Symphony plays an important civic role. Through sustained education programs and partnerships with schools and community organizations, thousands of students and families experience live orchestral music each year. These efforts position the Symphony not only as a performing arts institution, but as a cultural leader contributing to the vitality of Columbus.

The organization operates within one of the Midwest's fastest-growing metropolitan areas and benefits from an engaged philanthropic community and a collaborative arts environment. With forward-looking leadership and clear strategic priorities, the Columbus Symphony is focused on deepening its impact and strengthening long-term sustainability.





The Opportunity

The Director of Individual Giving will play a central role in that next phase of growth.

This position leads the Symphony's individual philanthropy strategy, building a strong annual giving foundation while developing meaningful relationships with major donors. The Director will shape how individuals experience and support the Symphony, ensuring that engagement feels personal, strategic, and aligned with the organization's artistic ambitions.

This is a role for a fundraiser who understands that revenue growth is the outcome of disciplined strategy and authentic relationships. The right candidate will bring both analytical rigor and a genuine enthusiasm for connecting people to music.

Position Overview

Reporting to the Chief Development Officer, the Director of Individual Giving leads the Symphony's individual fundraising strategy across annual and major giving. This role is responsible for strengthening donor retention, increasing revenue, and building a clear pathway from entry-level support to significant philanthropic investment.

The Director manages a personal portfolio of \$5,000+ donors while overseeing annual campaigns that create a reliable and growing base of support. This position works closely with senior leadership, Board members, and colleagues across the organization to ensure fundraising strategy aligns with programming and institutional priorities.



Key Performance Objectives

First Month

- Learn and assess existing annual giving programs and donor portfolios
- Meet with Development staff, Marketing and Communications colleagues, Board leaders, and senior leadership
- Review current donor pipeline, campaign performance, and engagement strategies
- Document observations and provide strategic recommendations to the Chief Development Officer

First 3–6 Months

Annual Giving Leadership

- Oversee direct mail, digital campaigns, donor circles, and special appeals
- Achieve measurable growth in participation, retention, and average gift size
- Target a 5–10% increase in donor renewal rate and a 5–15% increase in average gift size

Major Gift Fundraising

- Manage a personal portfolio of donors at the \$5,000+ level
- Conduct 20–25 donor meetings within the first six months
- Secure \$75,000–\$125,000 in verbal commitments

Stewardship and Engagement

- Implement timely and meaningful stewardship strategies
- Participate in cultivation events with musicians and artistic leadership
- Maintain complete and accurate donor records, including 100% completion of required contact reports

First Year

- Achieve defined annual giving revenue goals
- Secure a measurable number of new or upgraded major donors
- Launch at least one enhanced donor engagement initiative
- Demonstrate year-over-year growth in individual and major gift revenue
- Strengthen alignment between fundraising efforts and programming, education, and community impact
- Secure \$250,000–\$500,000 in verbal commitments

Other Duties

- Promote best practices in donor relations and individual philanthropy across the organization
- Attend concerts, cultivation events, and donor gatherings as required, including evenings and weekends
- Represent the Columbus Symphony with professionalism and enthusiasm in the community
- Contribute to a collaborative and solutions-oriented Development team culture



Key Qualifications & Experience

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree or CFRE preferred
- Progressive fundraising experience with demonstrated success in annual and major gifts
- Proven track record of cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding individual donors
- Experience managing donor portfolios and advancing gifts at the \$5,000+ level

Strategic and Analytical Capacity

- Strong strategic planning and problem-solving abilities
- Demonstrated ability to analyze performance data and translate insights into action
- Ability to manage multiple priorities while meeting deadlines in a dynamic environment

Relationship and Communication Skills

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to inspire trust and confidence among diverse donors
- High level of emotional intelligence and professional maturity
- Ability to represent the Columbus Symphony with credibility and enthusiasm in the community

Technical Proficiency

- Proficiency with donor management systems such as Tessitura, Raiser's Edge, Salesforce, or similar platforms
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite

Professional Attributes and Requirements

- Knowledge of and genuine passion for the performing arts strongly preferred
- Flexibility to work evenings and weekends to support concerts, events, and donor engagement
- Reliable transportation for off-site meetings
- Successful completion of a background check





Compensation & Benefits

The salary range for this position is **\$105,000-115,000** commensurate with experience and qualifications. The Columbus Symphony Orchestra offers a competitive and comprehensive benefits package that supports employee wellbeing and work-life balance.

To Apply

The Columbus Symphony has engaged ThinkingAhead Executive Search to lead this search. Interested candidates should submit a resume and letter of interest outlining their leadership experience and interest in the role.

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