



THE
AUSTIN
SYMPHONY

Vice President of Development

Position Announcement

About The Austin Symphony Orchestra

<https://austinsymphony.org/>

The Austin Symphony Orchestra (ASO) has been part of Austin’s creative heartbeat since 1911. As the city’s oldest performing arts organization, the ASO brings generations together through the shared experience of live music—from soaring symphonies to boundary-pushing contemporary works. With every performance, the orchestra celebrates the spirit and diversity of Central Texas.

Led by longtime Music Director Peter Bay, the ASO delivers an eclectic and exciting season of concerts at the Long Center, combining classical favorites with bold new sounds and imaginative collaborations. Whether it’s a thrilling pops concert, a stirring chamber performance, or a premiere by a living composer, the ASO brings fresh energy to the stage while honoring timeless traditions.

Beyond the concert hall, the ASO is passionate about making music matter in everyday life. Its educational and outreach programs reach thousands of young people and families each year, helping to ensure that symphonic music remains relevant, inspiring, and accessible for all. In every setting, the ASO is about connection—between music and memory, audience and artist, community and creativity.





Position Summary



The ASO seeks a visionary and strategic fundraising leader to serve as its next Vice President of Development. Reporting directly to—and serving as a key thought partner with—new CEO & Executive Director, Justus Zimmerman, this senior leader will shape and drive the Symphony’s philanthropic strategy, guiding all aspects of development to support the ASO’s artistic, educational, and community impact.

This is an opportunity for a results-oriented professional with deep development expertise, inspiring leadership skills, and a collaborative spirit. The Vice President will lead a talented team and oversee a comprehensive, multi-year fundraising strategy designed to grow revenue, deepen donor engagement, and build long-term sustainability. The VP will be responsible for meeting or exceeding annual fundraising goals (currently approximately \$2.5M+), while expanding efforts in major gifts, corporate sponsorships, foundation and government support, special events, planned giving, and endowment growth.

The ideal candidate brings not only a track record of fundraising success but also the ability to foster strong relationships with donors, board members, community partners, and colleagues alike. As a champion of the ASO’s mission and vision, the VP will play a critical role in ensuring the Symphony’s continued excellence and relevance in one of the country’s most vibrant and fast-growing cultural cities.



Key Responsibilities

Fundraising & Major Gifts

- Develop and implement strategies to identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward major donors and corporate sponsors.
- Manage a portfolio of high-net-worth individuals, aiming to secure gifts of \$25,000 and above.
- Lead campaigns exceeding \$10 million while achieving annual fund growth of at least 5%.
- Utilize data analysis to set and achieve fundraising goals, ensuring alignment with organizational objectives.

Leadership & Team Management

- Rebuild and lead a high-performing development team, making strategic personnel decisions as necessary.
- Establish a collaborative environment that encourages staff engagement in fundraising efforts.
- Provide mentorship and professional development opportunities to team members.

Organizational Integration & Culture Staff

- Foster cross-departmental collaboration, particularly with marketing, administration, education, and box office teams.
- Implement structured financial processes, including budgeting, forecasting, and revenue analysis.
- Drive a cultural shift towards integrated and cooperative development practices.
- Ensure development strategies resonate with Austin's unique cultural landscape and the Symphony's values.

Relationship Building & Emotional Intelligences

- Cultivate strong relationships with donors, board members, and stakeholders through high emotional intelligence and charisma.
- Collaborate closely with marketing to develop compelling donor materials and communications.
- Represent the Symphony at events and in the community to enhance its public profile.
- Inspire a cultural shift among the long term donor base to appreciate the financial needs of the ASO as the organization responds to, and evolves in, a rapidly growing city.

Strategic & Analytical Approach

- Oversee financial planning and revenue budgeting for the development department.
- Set clear, measurable goals and monitor fundraising progress through analytics.
- Ensure a balanced approach across all fundraising areas, including major gifts, campaigns, and annual giving.

Business Acumen & Work Ethic

- Align development goals with the Symphony's financial sustainability objectives.
- Demonstrate a results-driven approach with professionalism and a strong work ethic.
- Drive exceptional communication standards, serving as the cornerstone for both internal collaboration and external representation, with unwavering accountability and responsiveness. Stay informed about trends and best practices in arts fundraising.



Qualifications

- Minimum of 7-10 years of progressive experience in nonprofit fundraising, with a focus on major gifts and capital campaigns.
- Proven success in securing six- and seven-figure gifts from individuals and corporations.
- Demonstrated ability to lead and motivate teams, fostering a collaborative and goal-oriented environment.
- Strong analytical skills with experience in data-driven decision-making.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to engage and inspire a diverse range of stakeholders.
- Familiarity with the philanthropic landscape of Austin, Texas, is helpful, but not required.



Competencies

Fundraising

In partnership with the CEO/Executive Director, Board and appropriate staff, is responsible for developing and implementing fundraising systems and strategies that enable the organization to meet its financial development goals and carry out its programs and operations.

Grants Management

Managing the financial tasks required for grant applications and management of grant funds while ensuring financial compliance with all applicable requirements.

Organizational Leadership & Effectiveness

Managing resources and leading the ASO effectively and ethically, understanding stakeholder needs and priorities and the unique environment and dynamics of the Austin Symphony model.

Professionalism & Personal Integrity

Applying knowledge, sensitivity and judgment to act effectively and with personal integrity in accordance with the fundamental principles of professional and personal ethical behavior; and effectively managing self and resources to achieve the ASO mission and objectives.

Quality Management/Improvement

Designing and implementing policies and systematic processes to measure, analyze and improve organizational performance resulting in greater efficiency, cost-effectiveness and satisfaction.

Stakeholder Advocacy & Collaboration

Identifying, developing and maintaining collaborative relationships and communications with key stakeholders; managing stakeholder expectations and needs; aligning the organization to key stakeholder requirements.

Strategy & Innovation

Strategically assessing and evaluating courses of action and identifying imaginative opportunities to improve performance and position; implementing innovative and cost-effective solutions leading to effective change management and business process improvement.

Communication

Listening and interpreting verbal and non-verbal inputs in order to ensure thoughts and ideas are understood; determining what information is to be communicated, when and to whom; organizing a response based on an awareness of content and intended audience; sharing information, seeking feedback from others, and providing appropriate follow-up to ensure understanding of both the message and its intent; expressing ideas respectfully and sharing information in a clear and concise manner using the appropriate mode of communication.

Team Growth, Development and Engagement

Facilitating the development of knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors necessary for team members to function together with a high degree of engagement and satisfaction within the department and the ASO and at the highest possible levels of effective performance.

Compensation

Compensation for the Vice President, Development is \$135,000 to \$150,000 annually based on experience and includes an excellent package of employee benefits.

To Apply

Interested applicants should send a resume and a statement of interest to Jonathan McIntosh, Partner and Hannah GoslingGoldsmith, Recruiter with ThinkingAhead Executive Search:

Contact Information:

Jonathan McIntosh
Partner, ThinkingAhead Executive Search
615-391-2650 | jmcintosh@thinkingahead.com

Hannah GoslingGoldsmith
Recruiter, ThinkingAhead Executive Search
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Due to the nature of this position and our business, background checks will be conducted as a condition of employment.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The ASO is committed to equity, inclusion, and non-discrimination, and it is our policy and goal to promote the inclusion and engagement of the residents of Austin and Central Texas across all protected classes of people, including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship, cultural background and experiences, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, socio-economic status, physical and mental ability, and religion in all aspects of employment.

