

Music Director Job Description

ORGANIZATION SUMMARY:

The Plano Symphony Orchestra (PSO), founded in 1983, is a cornerstone of the arts and culture community in the DFW Metroplex, serving North Texas with a mission to inspire, educate, entertain, and involve the children, youth, and adults of our community in the enjoyment of great music. Over the years, the PSO has become known for its innovative concerts, prolific education and community-centric programming, and commitment to both classical works and popular music.

At the heart of the PSO's vision is a deep commitment to creating transformative experiences through the power of music. This commitment is evident in the Plano Symphony's subscription concerts, its community engagement initiatives, and its education programs that reach across North Texas, bringing the art form to diverse audiences and inspiring future generations of music lovers.

Like many performing arts organizations around the country, the PSO is navigating the challenges of the post-pandemic landscape, including issues affecting attendance and contributed income. To address these challenges, the PSO has recently adopted a new strategic plan focused on financial and organizational sustainability, community impact and awareness, and innovation. Indeed, the PSO's annual operating budget has grown significantly over the past three years, from \$1.5 million to nearly \$2.4 million.

The City of Plano is the largest city in Collin County and one of the major areas of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. It boasts a robust arts scene that is supported both by the City of Plano and other partners in and around the Metroplex. Plano's economy is a significant part of DFW and home to major corporations. Plano was recently named one of the best places to live in the United States. With an excellent school system, the Plano Independent School District's state-of-the-art concert hall, the Robinson Fine Arts Center, is home to the PSO's concerts.

The Plano Symphony has grown into one of the state's major regional orchestras and is highly regarded for its musical excellence, strong musicianship, and its ability to move seamlessly from the classical world into the pops universe. Currently, there are eight subscription concerts with an average orchestra size of 65-70 musicians. The list of guest artists who have performed with the PSO is impressive and a testament to the high regard with which the orchestra is held in the music world.

The PSO is governed by a 30-member Board of Directors and has 12 full-time staff members. The Symphony receives valuable support from the City of Plano and many individual, corporate, and foundation donors.

The PSO is privileged to have been led by Music Director Héctor Guzmán since its founding. After forty plus years of service, the time has come for Maestro Guzmán to free up his time to pursue other adventures and opportunities. Pending approval of the PSO Board of Directors, Maestro Guzmán will transition to Music Director Emeritus at the conclusion of the 2026/2027 Season.

POSITION SUMMARY:

The ideal candidate shall demonstrate exceptional musicianship and conducting skills; significant conducting experience, including work with professional musicians; knowledge of a broad range of repertoire; strong interpersonal, leadership, and communication skills; vision, passion, and ability to make symphonic music relevant and exciting for existing and new audiences. Previous artistic directorship required.

The Music Director (MD) reports to the President/CEO of the Plano Symphony Orchestra with an indirect report to the Board of Directors. MD is responsible for overseeing all the PSO artistic activities, ensuring that artistic excellence is maintained and developed. MD shall provide a clear artistic vision by providing programming that is imaginative and with a varied repertoire, engaging with musicians and inspiring audiences by making symphonic music accessible to all people, and deepening local, regional, and national relationships to develop audiences and broaden educational programs. MD shall collaborate with the President/CEO, as well as the Artistic, Marketing, and Finance Committees to ensure adherence to established artistic goals and budgets.

START DATE: July 1, 2027

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Develop diverse programming in close collaboration with the President/CEO and Artistic Committee. This includes classical, pops, contemporary, and educational programs.
- b. Design concerts, special events, and other programs that ensure high quality, challenging, and enjoyable orchestral experience for audiences and musicians.
- c. Prepare pre-concert talks, conduct all rehearsals and concerts of set performances and special events.
- d. Oversee the process of recruiting, auditioning, and selecting musicians, substitute players, and section seating.
- e. Maintain a respectful and engaging relationship with the orchestra.
- f. Oversee, mentor, and develop assistant conductor if position is filled.
- g. Serve as a visible ambassador for the PSO, participating in social, civic and media activities, raising funds, and helping to develop public awareness and a positive image of the orchestra throughout the community.
- h. Partner with local artistic organizations and other arts groups to grow audiences and develop community engagement.
- i. Attend Board meetings and annual Board retreat to provide reports on artistic activities. Embrace other collaborations as needed.
- j. Develop annual budget within guidelines developed by the Board and President/CEO for concerts and ensure adherence.
- k. Has sole responsibility for the naming of a concertmaster. Subject to the applicable terms of any written agreement existing from time to time between the concertmaster and PSO, the concertmaster should serve at the pleasure of the Music Director.
- l. PSO shall be the primary focus for this position, and it is preferred that the Music Director resides in the DFW area.
- m. Other responsibilities as deemed necessary and requested by the Board or President/CEO.

TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS:

- a. Excellent leadership, communication, and public speaking skills.
- b. Capacity to organize and influence people in support of artistic vision, as well as personal accountability and diplomacy traits.
- c. Interpersonal skills and team spirit, including the ability to work collaboratively with management, board members, volunteers, and members of the orchestra.
- d. A passion for the orchestra and its repertoire and an ability to translate that passion into well-coordinated programs and activities that carry out the orchestra's mission.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- a. Demonstrated track record of significant professional conducting experience.
- b. An advanced degree(s) in music.
- c. Mastery of an instrument/experience as a performer or soloist.
- d. Prior experience conducting all genres of music: classical, pops, ballet, opera, contemporary, educational, and youth concerts.
- e. Ability to devote the necessary time to perform all the activities in Plano.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS:

Compensation is competitive and commensurate with experience, qualifications, and engagement with the community and organization. Benefits are competitive.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Materials required for application are via digital submission only. Go to the PSO website (www.planosymphony.org) and locate the Music Director Search page and application portal under the "Get Involved" drop-down. All items listed below should be submitted no later than June 15, 2025.

- a. One-page letter of interest.
- b. Resume and CV.
- c. Two letters of recommendation.
- d. 2-3 sample programs/concerts.
- e. Video links of no more than 30 minutes of conducting coverage from both a concert and rehearsal standpoint in a variety of conducting styles, temp, historical periods, and repertoire. (If YouTube links are provided and protected, please provide the password in your application.)
- f. Document outlining your vision regarding:
 - Programming
 - Building an audience and
 - School/education outreach.
- g. No more than three optional documents of supporting documentation including reviews, published articles, interviews and other media.

The Plano Symphony Orchestra follows the spirit and intent of all federal, state and local employment laws and is committed to equal employment opportunity.