



Seattle Opera Director of Development

REPORTING TO: Executive Director
SALARY: DOQ

Mission Statement

Seattle Opera strives to produce musically extraordinary, theatrically compelling operas, employing uniformly high quality casts, dramatically aware conductors, and innovative yet textually concerned directors and designers. By continuing our emphasis on the work of Richard Wagner and by achieving national and international recognition for the quality of all our performances, Seattle Opera commits itself to advancing the cultural life of the Pacific Northwest.

The values at the core of Seattle Opera are:

- Art matters
- Professional integrity
- Audacity – not following others; doing the impossible
- Always striving for excellence
- Appreciating the value of all those who contribute to the Company



The Organization

Founded in 1963, Seattle Opera has developed into one of the leading opera companies in the United States. Since the arrival of General Director Speight Jenkins in 1983, Seattle Opera has been recognized internationally for its theatrically compelling and musically accomplished performances. Jenkins is recognized nationally as a leading authority on opera and a politically active arts advocate. During his twenty-seven year tenure, Seattle Opera has broken its box-office records many times over and its productions have captured the attention of critics and the public alike. Seattle Opera is renowned nationally for its casting and ensures that productions are of the highest artistic standards by engaging eminent artists from all over the world.

Maintaining a commitment to the presentation of the operas of Richard Wagner, Seattle Opera has earned its reputation as the “leading Wagner Company in America.” Of particular note is Wagner’s *Ring des Nibelungen*, produced by Seattle Opera on a four-year cycle. The company presented the first International Wagner Competition in 2006, with a second in August 2008. In the last 20 years, Seattle Opera has gone beyond the standard repertoire to present such operas as Handel’s *Xerxes* and *Julius Caesar*, Weber’s *Freischütz*, a co-production of Gluck’s *Iphigenia in Tauris* with The Metropolitan Opera, and a double bill of Bartok’s *Bluebeard’s Castle* with Schoenberg’s *Ewartung*. This year, the Seattle Opera commissioned and premiered the new American opera *Amelia*.



In August 2003, Seattle Opera inaugurated their new performance home, Marion Oliver McCaw Hall that was transformed from the previous Opera House thanks to a \$127 million collective campaign with Seattle Center Foundation and Pacific Northwest Ballet. The 2003-2004 inaugural season attracted the second highest level of attendance in the Company’s history and was supported by a donor base of over 9,000 households. Seattle Opera has attained, on an opera-by-opera basis, the highest per capita attendance of any major opera company in the U.S. Even in the past year’s economic climate, the Opera saw attendance figures increase. In addition to serving high numbers of people through its mainstage offerings, Seattle Opera serves thousands more through its groundbreaking education programs, its building of sets for other companies, and its regular live radio broadcasts on 98.1 Classical KING FM.

The Company employs a full-time professional staff of approximately 75 and engages its own professional regular chorus. The orchestra is drawn from members of the Seattle Symphony. The Seattle Opera Board of Trustees, a group of approximately 63 community leaders, is entrusted with fiscal responsibility for the Company. An Advisory Board, with approximately 20 members, provides an even wider base of stewardship, experience and expertise for the Opera. Between fiscal year 2006 and present, the company has raised \$32 million for artistic, endowment, and capital needs through fiscal year 2011.

Seattle Opera has been guided by a five-year strategic planning process since the early 90’s, an important and recognized hallmark of the Company’s success and stability. This long-range planning evaluation process involves Seattle Opera Trustees and Opera staff dedicated to securing a successful future for the Company.



Organizational Goals:

1. Inspire those participating in each opera production to achieve the highest possible level of excellence.
2. Make opera available to more audiences.
3. Stimulate the opera aficionado by revealing something new in every opera, and fascinate the newcomer by providing an exciting, entertaining, and accessible performance.
4. Make opera irresistibly exciting in schools and to adult audiences through education and marketing programs.
5. Maintain a high profile locally, nationally, and internationally.
6. Achieve long-term financial stability through careful cost control and development of the broad-based support necessary to finance the Company and its activities.
7. Ensure a working environment that fosters respect for individuals and encourages creativity in teamwork.



The Position

The Director of Development is the chief fundraising officer for the Company with the overriding goal of maximizing Seattle Opera's philanthropic potential. Overall responsibility for the annual, capital, special fundraising campaigns, and other ongoing fundraising efforts including planned giving, endowment, and major gifts rests with the Director of Development and the Development team.

As Director of Development for the Company, he/she actively participates in reviewing the Opera's contributed revenue objectives and in evaluating performance against these objectives via the short-term and long-range planning process. This includes expanding and improving current development programs and also leading the strategic planning process related to developing the next phase of support for the Company. An emphasis on major gift capacity growth, capital needs, endowment and planned giving initiatives as well as continued stellar stewardship of donors is expected.

The Director works closely with the Board of Trustees, General Director, Executive Director, and senior management directors to cultivate current donors and sustain a broad established donor base, while strengthening and maximizing the Company's philanthropic potential. The Director reports to the Executive Director and manages and develops department staff using best practices to position the Seattle Opera as a leader in the community and the industry.



Issues & Priorities

- The new Director will need to quickly learn about the Company from its funding sources to its programs then begin to build relationships with the leadership team, Development department, Board members, key donors, and other stakeholders. It is also critical for this person to quickly become acquainted with the Company's culture and history, and create his/her place within it.
- The Director of Development will continue to lead and implement the current five-year strategic fundraising goals. The goals are focused on maximizing the Company's philanthropic potential, increasing fundraising capacity, and embracing a more strategic approach to continually broaden the donor base, increasing the level of major gifts, and securing planned gifts from longtime donors.
- The Director of Development will work with the Executive Director, General Director, and Board leadership to launch a capacity building initiative and will plan for the company's future capital and endowment needs.
- The Director of Development will be expected to aggressively and creatively drive the short and long term strategic plans, comprising a comprehensive mix of fund raising vehicles. The contributed income raised for the fiscal year 2010 was approximately \$11.4 million including funds raised in support of *The Ring*. The goal for 2011 is \$10.7 million.
- The Director of Development will be intricately involved in the launch of a five year capacity building initiative for the company with the expressed intent of investing in the innovative and creative capital of the company. This initiative would be in addition to the annual fund goal and could range between an \$8 million to \$12 million effort.
- The Director of Development will continue to build upon the donor-centered approach to identifying, soliciting, and increasing major donors. There will be a continuing emphasis on ensuring best practices and excellence in donor stewardship.
- The Director of Development will work closely with the 63 Board members on fundraising efforts, engaging them to actively participate in development and cultivation activities by instilling confidence in the methods and goals, and providing a continuum of leadership, guidance, and support.



- The incoming Director of Development will evaluate the current staffing levels and functions, to clarify and define roles and responsibilities, as well as create and manage individual performance and job development goals. He/she will look at staffing needs taking into account the current economic environment and the Company's fundraising goals.
- It is important that Marketing and Development work collaboratively on effective communications, brand and cohesive messaging while utilizing appropriate innovations in order to maximize results both in marketing and development.
- Work collaboratively with the CFO to ensure a team approach for the development and finance staff that helps achieve joint understanding of how funds will be accounted for within the Company, and ensures donor intent and accounting standards are aligned.
- Create innovative and comprehensive solutions to development work to include maximizing technological resources and developing collaborative partnerships both in and out of the Company.
- The Director of Development serves as the staff leader on the Development Committee and the Nominations Committee. The new Director of Development will work closely with the Executive Director, General Director, and Board leadership to identify and cultivate new board members that meet the Company's needs.



Ideal Candidate Profile

The Director of Development will first and foremost possess a genuine interest, passion, and commitment for opera, its mission, and core values. We seek an individual who is a proven leader, has an audacious spirit, and feels comfortable taking risks while retaining accountability. The ideal candidate will have a solid track record in individual donor cultivation, major gifts, planned giving, endowment, capital, and annual support fundraising. Additionally, the successful candidate will have previously participated in developing and expanding an extensive network of contacts in giving communities.

Ideally, he or she will have demonstrated the ability to create innovative and comprehensive solutions to best reach the goals and objectives set forth. The Director of Development will create excitement around capacity building for the Opera and take a hands-on approach to accomplishing this objective. The successful candidate will be a motivating force for the Board of Directors, Executive Director, and General Director in establishing and enhancing connections to major donors.



Seattle Opera operates in a team-based environment and the Director of Development will be expected to interact effectively in cross-functional groups, providing insight when needed and seeking input proactively. Specifically, this position will work collaboratively with the Director of Marketing & Communications to assure overall marketing and development strategies are achieved.

We seek a capable and talented professional with a strong track record and excellent leadership skills to work with Board, Opera leadership, and major donors. He or she must be an articulate spokesperson for the organization, equally comfortable and effective interacting one-on-one, working with small groups, and occasionally presenting in front of large audiences. The ideal candidate will also be able to inspire and lead a committed staff to meet the objectives of the Company.

Our preferred candidate is a development professional with a strategic and impassioned approach when it comes to promoting the arts and raising funds. He or she is a goal-oriented, self-starter who thrives in an atmosphere that demands results. Our selected individual must be comfortable in a dynamic environment, which requires flexibility to be both a proactive leader and an active, hands-on participant in a collaborative work environment. As a lover of opera, the ideal candidate will be at ease with the hours associated with the art. A minimum of 5 years of experience overseeing fundraising programs in organizations with operating budgets of over \$10 million and contributed revenue goals of over \$6 million is required.

To Apply

Seattle Opera values diversity in all areas of its operations and is an equal opportunity employer welcoming and encouraging applications from all qualified persons. Please send resume and cover letter as soon as possible to:

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