



NASHVILLE OPERA

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Job Summary

Reporting to the Chief Development Officer (CDO), the Director of Development is a key member of the Nashville Opera development team responsible for designing and implementing a comprehensive, multi-channel annual giving and special gifts (Impresario Council) strategy that advances donor acquisition, renewal, and upgrades of gifts up to \$25,000. The primary focus of this position is to cultivate, solicit and steward prospects and existing donors, upgrade targeted donors, and acquire new annual giving donors.

The Director manages a portfolio of approximately 100 donors and prospects, focusing on cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding gifts that strengthen the major gifts pipeline and achieve ambitious annual fundraising targets. Drawing on a keen understanding of annual giving fundamentals, including special events, the Director fosters best practices and ensures that Nashville Opera is a leader in annual giving and stewardship as measured by total dollars, total participation, percentage participation, consistency of giving, and average gift size.

The Director will lead the strategy for Impresario Council engagement, including membership growth, renewal, and stewardship initiatives, and will partner with the Development Associate to plan and co-host events. The Director will also support the cultivation and stewardship of mainstage production patrons and corporate sponsors, helping to align all fundraising activity with Nashville Opera's strategic and artistic priorities.

Essential Responsibilities

- Working with development leadership, determine annual giving goals, and develop strategic and operational plans to increase unrestricted revenue.
- Manage a portfolio of approximately 100 assigned prospects giving between \$2,000 and \$25,000, with emphasis on donor upgrades and retention through face-to-face solicitations.
- Co-design the strategy for Impresario Council engagement and growth with the CDO and implement that strategy through personal meetings, events, direct solicitations, and targeted renewal and acquisition campaigns.

- Create and implement multi-channel annual fund solicitation and stewardship plans, including direct mail, email, and calling campaigns, in collaboration with marketing.
- Collaborate with the Development Associate on the execution of Impresario Council donor stewardship and fundraising events.
- Attend Nashville Opera performances and donor events, serving as a host for the Impresario Council Donor Lounge and other engagement opportunities that foster donor relationships.
- Collaborate with the CDO on corporate solicitations and sponsorship strategies for programs and special events.
- Draft select grant proposals for corporate and private foundation support and provide information and data to support government grant applications managed by external contractors.
- Partner with the CDO to cultivate, solicit, and steward mainstage patrons whose gifts underwrite opera productions.
- Develop relationships across Nashville Opera, including the executive management team and program staff, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the Opera's programs and priorities and to integrate this information into appeals.
- Maintain accurate records of donor activity in Tessitura and provide reports on revenue, engagement, and pipeline progress as requested by the CDO for the Development Committee and other meetings.
- Oversee gift entry and acknowledgment processes executed by the Administrative Assistant, ensuring accurate and timely gift processing, reconciliation with accounting, and high-quality stewardship communications.
- Develop and implement strategies to engage and steward season subscribers as a pipeline for future philanthropic support, partnering with Marketing and Patron Services to strengthen subscriber retention, loyalty, and donor conversion.

Requirements and Qualifications

- Minimum 3 years of progressive experience in frontline fundraising, annual giving, or related development work within a nonprofit setting; experience in performing arts or cultural organizations preferred.

Nashville Opera Director of Development

- Bachelor's degree required.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills with a proven track record of cultivating strong relationships with internal and external constituents and donors and creating effective partnerships with volunteers.
- Proven success in cultivating, soliciting, and closing individual gifts, with a record of achieving or exceeding fundraising goals.
- Well organized, with the ability to manage multiple priorities and projects on tight deadlines. Superior at multitasking with a high sense of purpose and urgency.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Experience with donor databases, preferably Tessitura, and comfort working with data analytics and performance tracking. Capable of tracking and monitoring data, identifying trends, and making recommendations for improvement.
- Collaborative team player with the ability to work independently and exercise sound judgment to achieve results.
- Commitment to fostering a welcoming, inclusive, and equitable community where all people can thrive.
- Ability to work nights and weekends as needed.

Reports To: Chief Development Officer

Collaborates Closely With

- Development Associate (event logistics and execution)
- Marketing Department (communications and donor engagement)
- Administrative Assistant (gift entry, acknowledgments, and accounting reconciliation support)
- Patron Services Manager (Tessitura reporting and audience segmentation)

Direct Reports: None

Compensation & Work Environment

This is a full-time, exempt position with a competitive salary and benefits package, including the possibility of a limited hybrid work arrangement. Must live in Davidson or a surrounding county. Nashville Opera values equity, creativity, and collaboration, and seeks candidates who reflect the diversity of our community.

To apply: send a resume and cover letter to development@nashvilleopera.org by July 30, 2026.