



Position Description:  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**THE OPPORTUNITY:**

Vermont's preeminent classical music organization, the Vermont Symphony Orchestra seeks a transformational leader who will build on its 85-year history of innovation, collaboration, and musical excellence as a signature cultural force for Vermont arts. The Executive Director will guide the VSO as a model 21<sup>st</sup> century orchestra, building on strong relationships with key stakeholders, a diverse list of venues, a talented and committed staff, an engaged Board of Directors, gifted musicians, and growing audiences.

The Executive Director will have the opportunity to select a successor to Jaime Laredo, the VSO's internationally acclaimed Music Director, who will be stepping down after 20 years in the spring of 2021. Together, the VSO's new Executive Director and Music Director will lead the organization successfully into the next era of its proud history.

**THE ORGANIZATION:**

Founded in 1934, the Vermont Symphony Orchestra is the country's oldest state-assisted, statewide orchestra, performing over 40 concerts each year throughout Vermont. In addition to orchestral concerts, the Orchestra also performs highly innovative chamber and educational programs, including Jukebox and Taste Test, in smaller venues appealing to more diverse audiences. The orchestra takes pride in its deep connections to Vermont's local communities, its vibrant rural traditions, and its multi-layered arts culture. The VSO enjoys close partnerships with other organizations throughout the State. The VSO's strategic vision is outward-facing, looking to build continuously on these important relationships.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Executive Director's specific responsibilities include:

- *Visionary Leadership.* Leading and articulating the VSO's vision and strategic direction; inspiring support, clearly communicating, and maintaining positive momentum with Staff, Board, Orchestra, and VSO's broad and diverse public constituencies to carry out organizational objectives.
- *Development.* Taking a leadership role in development efforts with specific responsibility for closing major gifts, working alongside the Director of Philanthropy. The successful candidate will be results-driven and have proven major gift success as well as experience in setting, measuring, and meeting or exceeding development program goals.



- *Orchestra Relations & Artistic Vision.* Working closely with the Music Director and Orchestra Committee to develop and implement the VSO's artistic vision and goals; recognizing the organization's unique partnership with its musicians; building trust and maintaining close working relationships with orchestra members and the Orchestra Committee; and leading the negotiation of the VSO's Collective Bargaining Agreement with the American Federation of Musicians.

- *Educational Programs.* Overseeing VSO's statewide music education programs in public schools (a critical part of the VSO mission), including in-school small ensemble performances, early education series for pre-schools, subsidized student tickets, instrument instruction, and concert mentorship programs.

- *Staff Management.* Managing a highly-motivated staff; providing professional development opportunities; implementing and managing performance metrics and evaluations for department evaluation; establishing clear departmental goals, and conducting regular employee reviews.

- *Board Relations.* Facilitating Board management consistent with governance best practices; promoting proactive Board oversight and communication; contributing to the selection and recruitment of new Board members with diverse, high level skills; and working closely with the Board Chair to support the Board's governance functions.

- *Finance.* Managing a \$1.5 million annual budget and a \$4.5 million endowment to assure sustainable and fiscally responsible practices for long-term financial stability; and working closely with the finance team to develop financial monitoring and budgeting tools to meet organizational needs, while promoting growth and innovation.

- *Community Engagement.* Serving as the primary public advocate and an energetic, outward-facing spokesperson and ambassador for VSO; constantly expanding and sustaining relationships with audience, media, collaborators, and the public at large.

#### **REPORTING:**

The Executive Director reports directly to the Board Chair and the VSO's Board of Directors and is reviewed annually by the Board in accordance with VSO personnel policies. The Executive Director serves as the organization's chief executive officer and is charged with managing all other VSO employees, including the Music Director.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

At a minimum, the Executive Director will have: a Bachelor's degree; significant leadership experience in the nonprofit sector, preferably with an arts organization; demonstrated development experience, including



success in closing major gifts; and a love of the arts, particularly orchestral music. However, the VSO respects every individual's unique journey through life and will welcome personal statements which can deepen our understanding of any candidate's qualifying experiences. An equivalent combination of education and experience may satisfy these minimum qualifications. We appreciate all interest in this opportunity and look forward to responding to candidates whose experience most closely aligns with this position description.

**APPLICATIONS:**

Interested applicants should send cover letter and resume to [execsearch@vso.org](mailto:execsearch@vso.org). Candidate review begins immediately; applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

*The Vermont Symphony Orchestra is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, criminal conviction, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.*