

ASPEN LEADERSHIP GROUP

CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER
[KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY](#)
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with the Kansas City Symphony in the search for a Chief Development Officer. The Kansas City Symphony seeks a transformative leader who will pioneer breakthrough strategies and inspire a new era of philanthropic engagement for one of America's most innovative major orchestras.

The Chief Development Officer will lead all fundraising and philanthropic initiatives of the Kansas City Symphony. The Chief Development Officer will play a pivotal role in developing and implementing a comprehensive fundraising strategy that supports the Symphony's budding growth-minded culture of entrepreneurial innovation, intelligent risk taking, and significant change. As both a functional and cultural leader in the organization, the Chief Development Officer will bring extensive experience as a philanthropy team leader and individual practitioner, possessing a deep background in the cultivation and stewardship of major donors and correlated fundraising efforts while setting and exceeding aggressive fundraising benchmarks.

In only its 42nd season, the Kansas City Symphony has already become one of America's most vibrant major orchestras and has gained national and international recognition. With the 2024/2025 season, the Symphony welcomed Matthias Pintscher as its new music director. Pintscher regularly conducts many of the world's best orchestras and opera companies and ranks as one of the world's foremost composers of orchestral music.

Continually creating live music experiences in Helzberg Hall, located in the prestigious Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, the Symphony serves Kansas City's metro population of more than 2.2 million people as well as welcoming visitors from around the globe. The Symphony's 80 full-time musicians from around the world bring a diverse and dynamic range of musical experiences to audiences in both orchestral and chamber music formats each season. In addition to concerts in Helzberg Hall, Symphony musicians perform throughout the region on its portable stage, the Mobile Music Box. The Symphony also serves as the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, adding to the rich cultural experiences that these organizations offer to the community.

Top international soloists perform with the Kansas City Symphony every season, including brilliant classical musicians, popular singer/songwriters, rock bands, and other creative performers. The Symphony performs live soundtracks for a variety of fan-favorite films, with the movie projected on a giant screen above the stage. In 2024, the orchestra was invited to Europe to be presented by some of the top venues in the world, and additional invitations have been received for a return as soon as 2026.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Chief Development Officer will report to the President and CEO, Danny Beckley, and oversee a strong team of 7-8 staff.

FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

This is a unique opportunity to be a part of building something extraordinary—not just for Kansas City, but as a model for symphony orchestras across the country. We are transforming into an entrepreneurial, highly innovative, and fast-moving organization. I am seeking a partner in the Chief Development Officer who can help me lead this organization through this transformation and into a bright future, becoming one of America’s most admired symphony orchestras so that we may bring Kansas City truly world-class music experiences.

The Chief Development Officer will be a change agent, first and foremost. This role requires deep leadership experience that motivates and inspires others to work together to create a model of vital impact for a community. Symphony orchestras in America are historically slow-moving servants of tradition, but that is not our way. We exist to serve the people of Kansas City through music, and we do so boldly and bravely to maximize the impact we can have in people’s lives.

We are building a culture that embraces iteration, innovation, and a willingness to take bold risks to achieve excellence. We encourage creative problem-solving and focus on how we can say "yes" to new ideas and opportunities.

The Chief Development Officer will be a key partner to me in leading this cultural transformation across staff, donors, and musicians. There is tremendous support in our community for what we are pursuing. One donor shared with me, "You all are the first arts organization I have ever seen who is actually doing the hard work of innovation and change." A leading composer in America remarked that we are "the only major orchestra in America to embody the high degree of innovative spirit that we very much need in this field."

Matthias, our visionary Music Director, and I are pushing this orchestra forward in a big way. The music-making is evolving at an exponential pace, and Matthias and the musicians are determined to make this orchestra one of the best-sounding in America. I believe they will do it, and our job as administrative leaders is to develop the resources, community alignment, and professional support needed to achieve this.

Our ambition speaks for itself. In the past five months, Matthias and I have led this orchestra through more change than most orchestras see over decades. We have increased the diversity of our concert offerings by 46% through new experiences like Symphonic Piazza, On Stage, and the forthcoming Matthias’s Jukebox. We are performing in new places and exploring new formats—utilizing outdoor concerts at parks and stadiums and imagining immersive indoor experiences. We’ve also rebranded the organization and developed a new marketing and technology structure that embraces what works in live entertainment and sports.

If this environment sounds intriguing to you, I invite you to apply. This kind of innovative environment is not for everyone, and that’s okay. But if being a part of leading bold change for an organization and an industry speaks to you, and if you believe that music can play a unique role in bringing people together and improving connection with one another, then I would love to hear from you.

Together, we can build something extraordinary.

—Danny Beckley, President and CEO

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Cultural Leadership

- Lead as a transformative figure within the organization, championing an agile growth-minded culture that embraces innovation and intelligent risk-taking.
- Build strong, trusted partnerships with the CEO and peers, to ensure alignment of donor engagement strategies with organizational strategies and goals.
- Inspire trust and collaboration by breaking down silos and fostering connections among staff, musicians, donors, and the broader community.

Fundraising Excellence

- Achieve annual fundraising growth targets, contributing to the Symphony's strategic financial goals.
- Develop and execute a comprehensive fundraising strategy that elevates donor engagement and secures significant gifts.
- Cultivate, solicit, and steward relationships with a portfolio of 75+ major donors, foundations, and corporations, achieving transformational annual gifts of \$25,000+.
- Support the President and CEO and key leaders in fundraising by conducting and providing prospect research, developing briefing memos and remarks, crafting gift request materials, and managing full meeting preparations and follow-up.
- Reimagine donor experiences by integrating personalized engagement strategies, leveraging data insights, and crafting events that deepen connections and inspire long-term investment.
- Work closely with the Chief Marketing and Experience Officer to develop, implement, and manage strategic communications efforts that effectively promote the organization, including letters, email, social media, and printed publications.

Operational Oversight

- Establish and refine systems and processes to optimize fundraising operations and ensure sustainability.
- Set and monitor performance metrics for all components of contributed revenue, regularly evaluating progress and adjusting strategies as needed.
- Oversee accurate and effective management of donor data, reports, and analytics to support informed decision-making and relationship building.

Team Leadership

- Foster a culture of creativity and accountability, empowering the team to surpass ambitious fundraising benchmarks.
- Mentor and guide a high-performing team of fundraising professionals, fostering a collaborative, results-driven environment.
- Provide resources and support for staff to execute successful campaigns and initiatives while cultivating professional growth.
- Encourage creative problem-solving.

LEADERSHIP

Danny Beckley **President and CEO**

Daniel E. Beckley has served as Kansas City Symphony's leader since July 2019. He manages the organization's \$25 million annual budget and a full-time staff of 40 professionals, and he works with the orchestra's 80 full-time musicians to present nearly 200 concerts each season. Beckley works closely with the Music Director on programming and artistic planning as well as with the Board of Directors on strategic initiatives to continue the Symphony's remarkable record of success. Most recently, Beckley served for six years as Vice President and General Manager of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra where he was responsible for orchestra operations, performance and administrative facilities, and the Symphony's summer concert and presentation series. Prior to that time, he was Executive Director of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in South Carolina. His other experience includes serving as Managing Director of BlueKey Web Solutions in Charleston, a company he founded. Beckley earned a bachelor's degree in music education from James Madison University and a master's degree in music performance from Northwestern University. He received additional training from the League of American Orchestras and the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. In his free time, Beckley enjoys being outdoors with his wife and children. In addition to his continued pursuit of music making through the trombone, he designs and builds custom furniture.

Matthias Pintscher **Music Director**

Matthias Pintscher serves at Kansas City Symphony's fifth Music Director. As Music Director, Pintscher leads the KCS for ten weeks each season. Working in close partnership with President and CEO, Danny Beckley, he strives to shape each program as a unique experience and find new ways of presenting music to the community.

Matthias Pintscher is "a sculptural conductor who continually conjures up images for one's ears" (Der Tagesspiegel, Germany). Having completed his tenure as Music Director of Ensemble Intercontemporain, winner of the 2022 Polar Music Prize, he recently led the ensemble on their final European and U.S. tours together, which featured appearances at both Carnegie and Disney Halls. Also in his third season as Creative Partner of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Pintscher's previous titled positions include Principal Conductor of the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra, Music Director of California's Ojai Music Festival, Season Creative Chair of Zurich's Tonhalle Orchestra, Artist-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and nine seasons as Artist-in-Association of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. In addition, he enjoys especially close relationships with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, besides appearing almost annually with Florida's New World Symphony.

Alongside his conducting career, Pintscher is one of today's preeminent composers. His music is championed by some of the finest performing artists, conductors and orchestras worldwide, including the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and Orchestre de Paris. He has served on the composition faculty of New York's Juilliard School since 2014. Born in Marl, North Rhine-Westphalia, Pintscher studied conducting with Pierre Boulez and Peter Eötvös.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Kansas City Symphony seeks a Chief Development Officer with an ability to lead with courage and conviction in service to the Kansas City Symphony and the community it serves. The successful candidate should exhibit selfless, confident, and bold leadership. At this pivotal moment in the history of American orchestras, it seeks a Chief Development Officer with the drive to ensure that the Kansas City Symphony impacts far more lives through music than orchestras have historically achieved.

Furthermore, the Kansas City Symphony seeks a Chief Development Officer with

- a desire and proclivity to work in an agile, fast-moving environment of innovation, iterative risk taking, and positive disruption;
- significant experience leading and mentoring high-performing teams, particularly through periods of change;
- a track record of change leadership and an ability to develop and implement strategies that drive enduring engagement and increase revenue;
- excellent interpersonal and communication skills, both written and oral, with an ability to engage and inspire a diverse range of stakeholders; and
- a history of raising significant funds in a nonprofit or cultural institution.

A bachelor's degree and at least ten years of successful revenue-generating experience is required for this role.

The Kansas City Symphony will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds who meet the requirements outlined above. Additionally, a passion for live music and the performing arts is preferred.

If this opportunity excites you and you have the drive to lead transformative change, we want to hear from you. The future of the American orchestras is being built here—and now.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

- Salary
- 403(b) retirement plan
- Healthcare
- Vacation, PTO
- Relocation support to Kansas City

LOCATION DYNAMICS

The Kansas City Symphony's headquarters are in the heart of downtown Kansas City, directly adjacent to the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts (approximately 25 minutes southeast of the Kansas City International Airport). The CEO (Danny Beckley) and the senior leadership team believe a successful CDO needs to reside in the greater Kansas City area, which allows the CDO to be in the HQ office 4-5 days/week as well as participating in performances on evenings and weekends.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the purpose of the Kansas City Symphony and the responsibilities and qualifications specified in the position prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

To apply for this position, visit: [Chief Development Officer, Kansas City Symphony](#).

To nominate a candidate, please contact [Anne Johnson](#).