

Chattanooga Symphony & Opera
Job Description
Conductor and Director of Education and Creative Community Engagement

SUMMARY

Job Title: Conductor and Director of Education and Creative Community Engagement (CDE)
Department: Education
Reports To: Executive Director / Music Director
Salary: \$58-62K
Hours: Full-Time Exempt Salaried Position, includes some nights/weekends
Benefits: 403(b); Heath Stipend, Flex time

The Chattanooga Symphony & Opera (CSO) is excited to invite applicants for the unique position of Conductor and Director of Education and Creative Community Engagement (CDE), starting in the 2026/2027 season. This highly skilled educator and musically accomplished individual will be a part of the CSO's artistic leadership team, combining major conducting responsibilities with strategic educational and community leadership. This full-time position combines significant conducting opportunities with vision-driven educational and community leadership, working closely with the Music Director, Executive Director, orchestra musicians, administrative staff, schools, and partner organizations. The CDE serves not only as the Music Director of the Chattanooga Youth Symphony (CYS) but also as an ambassador, public communicator, and leader in advancing the CSO's mission to inspire, engage, and connect through music. This is a highly collaborative role requiring artistic excellence, pedagogical vision, strategic thinking, and exceptional communication skills.

POSITION SUMMARY

The CDE is an integral member of the CSO's artistic leadership team. They will:

- Conduct the Chattanooga Youth Symphony and select CSO programs (education concerts, family concerts, pops or specials, community events) as assigned.
- Lead the conception, programming, and execution CSO education and community engagement initiatives.
- Serve as a public-facing ambassador and the primary liaison between schools, community partners, and the CSO ensembles, cultivating and managing relationships to support ongoing and future collaborative and outreach initiatives.
- Oversee the CSO ensembles in collaboration with the CSO leadership team.
- Supervise education staff, teaching artists, and youth participants.

- Participate in artistic planning and organization-wide strategy with the MD and ED.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Chattanooga Youth Symphony

- Serve as Music Director of the Chattanooga Youth Symphony (CYS), overseeing all aspects of the program (musical, educational, and administrative).
- Oversee all administrative aspects of the CYS, including operations, communications with CSO staff and parents, scheduling, recruitment, and budget management.
- Conduct all rehearsals and performances of the CYS (with the exception of those conducted by the MD as part of the strengthening of relationship between the CYS and CSO)
- Program diverse and educationally enriching repertoire that supports the growth of young musicians.
- Supervise education staff, CYS personnel, teaching artists, and volunteers.
- Work closely with CSO musicians to foster mentorship opportunities and collaborative projects between the professional orchestra and youth ensembles.

CSO Conductor and Director of Education

- Design, implement, evaluate, and conduct when required the CSO's educational programs, including Young People's Concerts, in-school residencies, masterclasses, and family programming, amongst other initiatives.
- Conduct other select CSO performances, including, pops, family, community, and special programs, as assigned by the Music Director.
- Collaborate with the Music Director on programming for education and family concerts; contribute repertoire ideas and artistic insights for season planning.
- If interest is shown, the opportunity to cover concerts conducted by the Music Director or other guest conductors.
- Assist with offstage conducting needs and stage/technical cueing when required.

Education & Community Engagement

- Develop innovative curriculum, concert scripts, learning materials, and multimedia content in collaboration with CSO staff and musicians.
- Develop and grow comprehensive education initiatives that connect the CSO to schools, educators, students, and families across the region.

- Lead community engagement initiatives that deepen the CSO's presence across the greater Chattanooga area, including partnerships with schools, libraries, cultural institutions, and community centers.
- Build partnerships with schools, community organizations, and cultural institutions to expand access to orchestral music and partnership reach.
- Serve as the CSO's primary representative at education and engagement events—presenting, hosting, speaking, and building strong community relationships.

Other Administrative & Organizational Responsibilities

- As Director of Education collaborate with CSO administrative staff to ensure alignment of education programs with the organization's artistic, budgetary, and strategic goals.
- Track and report outcomes and impact of education and engagement programs to the Education Committee and Grants Manager.
- Oversee the CSO ensembles in collaboration with the CSO leadership team.
- Oversee all administrative aspects of the CYS, including auditions, recruitment, scheduling, budget management, and communications.
- Participate in all relevant organizational and planning meetings as needed.
- Supervise education staff and volunteers as assigned.
- Represent the CSO in public relations, donor events, and media appearances as requested.

Communication & Collaboration

- Build and maintain strong relationships with orchestra musicians, parents, educators, donors, and community partners. Serve as the primary point of contact for CYS students and parents.
- Serve as a liaison between artistic and administrative teams to ensure seamless coordination of events and programs.
- Demonstrate clear, professional, and inspiring communication both on and off the podium.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Minimum of 3-5 years of professional conducting experience in a symphony orchestra setting (or equivalent experience), including work with youth, education, or community programs
- Knowledge of orchestral operations, professional rehearsal protocols, and (preferred) experience working within a musician's union environment

- Strong knowledge of the symphonic and educational repertoire, demonstrating a deep understanding of both the classical orchestral canon and evolving repertoire trends
- Experience designing educational or community-based programs for orchestras.
- A demonstrated commitment to supporting the CSO's mission to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture
- Demonstrated artistic skill, rehearsal technique, and score preparation
- Strong public speaking and audience engagement skills
- Exceptional oral and written communication skills
- Proven ability to successfully manage relationships with orchestra staff, professional and student musicians, the music director, and other key constituents
- Flexibility to work days, evenings, and weekends as required
- Demonstrated ability to motivate and inspire others
- Ability to communicate effectively and to handle calmly and efficiently situations ranging from routine to emergency
- Must be willing to move or reside in the Chattanooga area
- Must be legally authorized to work in the United States
- Ideal candidate will be fluent in Spanish

An Example of Possible Workload Overview, as per our current season*

- Approximately 30 CYS rehearsals annually (Monday evenings, August–May), plus Sunday afternoon dress rehearsals as scheduled
- Three CYS concert cycles each season.
- Ongoing community and education engagements year-round
- Support, attend, or conduct additional performances as scheduled (e.g., chamber groups, special events)
- Oversee the CYS Concerto Competition judging panel
- Collaborate with broader CSO team for administration and long-term planning (approximately 2-3 hours per week year-round)
- Conduct CSO programs. These include for example the CSO's Young People's Concert, Family Opera collaboration with Atlanta Opera, and any other programs as assigned.

*As we encourage new initiatives and growth, the potential workload will change, as new programs and concert opportunities arise each season.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process will have a number of selection rounds:

1. Online Application
2. Interview (Live/Online)
3. Live audition with CYS and follow-up interview with parents and selection committee
4. Live audition with CSO and follow-up interview with CSO staff and selection committee

Apply online by: **January 16, 2026**

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

To apply for the Conductor and Director of Education and Creative Community Engagement, please forward the following to hiring@chattanoogastringsymphony.org:

- A cover letter that includes a link to an introductory video of yourself (maximum 2 minutes)
- Links to videos of yourself conducting. See **Information on Videos**.
- Current resume/CV
- A personal statement outlining your philosophy of education and community engagement through the lens of this role (maximum 1 page)
- Letters of recommendation are strongly encouraged

INFORMATION ON VIDEOS

Introduction video: The goal of the video is to get to know you, as well as evaluate how you present yourself, level of oral skills, engagement, and what you view as important in the span of 2 minutes

Conducting videos: Videos must be submitted via YouTube, Vimeo, or similar online video hosting services. Do not send videos as files attached to emails. If videos are password protected, please be sure to include password information. If using YouTube, videos may be marked as “unlisted” but please DO NOT mark videos as “private.” Online video submission must be easily accessible by multiple users.

Videos will ideally include:

- 10-15 min of conducting various styles, from the orchestra’s vantage point, quality video and sound
- Both performance and preferably a rehearsal
- An ensemble consisting of at least 15 musicians, preferably a full/professional orchestra
- If available, a video from an educational concert where you both conduct and speak

- If available, a video from a rehearsal with a youth orchestra

Not adhering to these criteria will not disqualify, but those will give us the best and clearest picture and are strongly encouraged

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Applications will be closed on January 16, 2026 at 11:59 PM Eastern Time.

Online / in-person interviews will take place after applications close. Additional sample materials may be requested at that time. Semifinalists will be notified by January 30, 2026, and will be provided with the repertoire list for the semi-finalist audition with the CYS. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Semifinalist Audition: February 23, 2026, at First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, Chattanooga, TN with the CYS. Should candidates require assistance with finding accommodations we will be happy to help. Finalists will be notified by March 13, 2026, and will be provided with the repertoire list for the finalist audition with the CSO.

In addition, Semifinalists will need to prepare:

Sample education workshop with script and target audience explanation

Finalist Audition: April 18, 2026, at First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, Chattanooga, TN with the Chattanooga Symphony & Opera. Candidate will be notified by April 24, 2026 and announced May 1, 2026. Finalists will be given hotel accommodations and travel stipend up to \$250. Start date will ideally be June 1, 2026.

In addition, Finalists will need to prepare:

CYS Vision (post interaction) with sample program and explanation

Visit www.chattanoogasympphony.org for more information.