



**ROCO, Houston's Chamber Orchestra**, seeks to hire a new **Managing Director**. The ideal candidate is a forward-thinking, solutions-oriented, collaborative, empathetic, bold, and innovative leader with an entrepreneurial spirit, growth mindset, and a passion for the arts. Candidates who are team players with proven experience in nonprofit management, specifically in fundraising and operations, would be especially well-suited for this role.

**ABOUT ROCO** (See <https://roco.org/about-roco/> for more information)

ROCO is Houston's deeply local, globally impactful 40-piece professional chamber orchestra. Founded in 2005 by Julliard-trained oboist Alecia Lawyer, ROCO has experienced robust growth throughout its 21 seasons and is poised to continue to be on the forefront of the classical field. With a mission of shaping the future of classical music, ROCO envisions a world in which human connection through the shared language of music is abundant and available to all. To achieve this mission, ROCO provides performances and experiences that are accessible, approachable, bold, and innovative.

Each season, ROCO produces four to five full-orchestra concerts, alongside more than a dozen smaller chamber concerts featuring programs that are site-specific, some curated by core musicians. Of ROCO's [40 professional musicians](#), half reside locally and half travel to Houston to perform. Twenty-eight of the original ROCO musicians play with the orchestra to this day. ROCO concerts also feature internationally recognized guest conductors, composers, and artists.

**NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:**

- ROCO's debut album, [Visions Take Flight](#), recognized with a GRAMMY® Award for Producer of the Year, Blanton Alspaugh
- Alecia Lawyer, ROCO's Founder and Artistic Director, recently named the 2025 inaugural Texas Classical Musician of the Year
- The Donne Foundation's recent global report ranked ROCO as second internationally, after the BBC Symphony, in programming works by women and composers of color.

Over the past 21 years, ROCO has become one of the nation's most prolific commissioning organizations in the country, presenting [155 world premieres](#) alongside classics and rarely-heard gems. ROCO concerts are multigenerational, multimedia experiences that have been produced in over 80 different venues across Houston to date.

ROCO employs a human-first philosophy that prioritizes relationships, curiosity, kindness, and meaningful connection among audiences, donors, musicians, staff, and community partners. Every organizational decision is viewed through the lens of creating welcoming and engaging experiences while reducing barriers to participation in the arts. This includes

[Pay-What-You-Wish](#) ticketing for most concerts, free global [livestreaming](#), and on-demand access to concert [audio](#) and [video](#) recordings.

ROCO has pioneered the use of technology in service of deeper audience engagement. Inviting audiences to turn ON their smartphones and tablets, initiatives include a digital app (search ROCOhouston in the App store), with the unique ability to view scores and parts to each piece during concerts. The trailblazing initiative [ROCO on the Go](#), places QR codes throughout Houston in parks, hospitals, and schools which connect directly to curated playlists within ROCO's free digital library of 1,500 tracks.

During and after the 2024–25 season, ROCO refined its brand identity and experienced significant growth in visibility and audience engagement, including at-capacity concert attendance. The organization will continue expanding its local, national, and international profile while undertaking a full website rebuild to reimagine access to ROCO's extensive recording catalog.

#### **CLARITY ON OUR MISSION:**

- Main Stage performances
- Mission-driven collaborations
- Cultivating a culture of kindness
- Learning and new experiences for all ages and all people
- Human/musician-centered service for full access and main-stage artist connection to our community

ROCO prioritizes the impact of at-capacity audiences instead of selling out shows; relationships instead of transactions; and access instead of outreach. The whole organization is a vibrant and growing nonprofit committed to building a team that represents a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and skills, creating an employee experience that encompasses appreciation, belonging, growth, and purpose for everyone. ROCO operates as a team, and the organizational culture is highly collaborative: all members' thoughts, ideas, and opinions are valued and encouraged. All are invested in pushing ROCO forward and finding new and better ways to serve the community through music.

#### **THE ROLE: MANAGING DIRECTOR; LOCATION IN HOUSTON, TX**

The Managing Director works in close partnership with the Founder/Artistic Director to guide ROCO's next chapter of organizational evolution. Reporting directly to the Board of Directors, these co-managing leaders collaboratively oversee organizational strategy, fundraising, fiscal stewardship, audience growth, operations, marketing, and institutional advancement.

ROCO's leadership and board are aligned around ambitious long-term goals centered on systemic change, blueprint creation, and artistic innovation. ROCO is not focused on becoming larger for the sake of growth, but on building the resources, infrastructure, and support that outpace the artistic goals and opportunities that align directly with its mission and opportunities.

## **ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE**

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EXECUTION**

The Managing Director partners with leadership and the Board to execute ROCO's five-year strategic plan by translating long-range vision into actionable priorities, operational systems, resource planning, and measurable outcomes.

### **FUNDRAISING AND PHILANTHROPIC GROWTH**

ROCO's projected operating budget for the 2026–27 season is \$2.7 million. Considering that ROCO's Pay-What-You-Wish ticketing model intentionally prioritizes access, approximately 98% of the organization's budget is supported through contributed revenue.

The Managing Director serves as a key member of the development team and shares responsibility for achieving fundraising goals. In collaboration with the Founder/Artistic Director, Development Director, and Board of Directors, the Managing Director cultivates donor and institutional relationships, expands philanthropic investment, and strengthens long-term financial sustainability. While ROCO has built a strong base of major individual and institutional support, substantial opportunities remain in annual fund development, mid-level giving, corporate sponsorships, and endowment growth. ROCO is currently expanding its development team with the addition of an Individual Gifts Officer for these areas of focus.

### **FISCAL STEWARDSHIP**

The Managing Director oversees financial planning, budgeting, forecasting, and resource alignment in collaboration with leadership and the Board and is supported by a contracted fractional CFO and Controller, and the Board Treasurer.

### **STAFF LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE**

In partnership with the Founder/Artistic Director, the Managing Director helps cultivate a high-performing and collaborative culture aligned with ROCO's mission and values. The role includes recruiting, mentoring, supervising, and evaluating staff while strengthening the operational capacity required to support ROCO's continued artistic ambition and organizational momentum. The Managing Director establishes clear accountability, encourages cross-functional collaboration, and ensures staff and contractor roles are appropriately structured to support a thriving and effective organization.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING**

Working closely with leadership and the Board, the Managing Director helps guide ROCO through its next stage of organizational maturity by strengthening operational infrastructure, governance, systems, and team development.

## **ADVOCACY AND EXTERNAL LEADERSHIP**

The Managing Director serves as one of the key external ambassadors and spokespersons for ROCO, proactively building strategic relationships with civic and community leaders, artistic partners, media outlets, industry organizations, and audiences in support of the organization's visibility and long-term growth. The Managing Director positions themselves as a visible leader in the arts and culture sector in Houston, nationally, and beyond. Accordingly, the Managing Director provides guidance and oversight in the development and implementation of marketing and communications strategies designed to enhance visibility and reach.

## **POSITION QUALIFICATIONS**

The ideal Managing Director candidate will demonstrate most of the following qualifications and characteristics:

- Commitment to ROCO's mission of shaping the future of classical music through experiences that are accessible, bold, innovative, and welcoming
- Collaborative leadership style grounded in honesty, creativity, curiosity, and solution-oriented thinking
- Demonstrated success in securing philanthropic support and cultivating relationships with donors, patrons, civic leaders, and stakeholders
- Strong understanding of Houston's philanthropic and cultural landscape
- Financial acumen, including experience managing budgets and achieving revenue goals
- Strategic and growth-oriented thinking paired with strong follow-through and execution
- Excellent communication skills, including comfort, ease, and enjoyment of public speaking
- At least eight years of progressively responsible nonprofit experience, including at least five years in a management role
- Experience in the arts and culture sector is preferred.
- Knowledge of classical music is not required; However, curiosity, openness, and a lifelong-learning mindset are essential
- Bachelor's degree or higher

## **LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE**

ROCO operates through a co-managing leadership model in which both the Managing Director and Founder/Artistic Director report directly to the Board of Directors. The Managing Director directly supervises the Director of Development and Director of Marketing and Communications while overseeing relationships with the fractional CFO and contract accounting services.

## **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

This position is budgeted at a minimum salary of \$140,000 annually and includes health, vision, and dental insurance, a 401(k) retirement plan, reserved garage parking, and unlimited PTO.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

ROCO is proud to have been shaped by the contributions of talented individuals with a broad range of experiences and perspectives. We encourage all interested candidates to apply. ROCO is an equal opportunity employer.

Candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to:

[jobs@roco.org](mailto:jobs@roco.org)

Attn: Managing Director Search Committee

Subject line: ROCO Managing Director - YOUR NAME

The cover letter should describe how the candidate's background and experience align with the priorities outlined in this position description and why ROCO appeals to their next career iteration.

**Applications submitted without a cover letter will not be considered.**

Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Candidates selected to move forward should expect a multi-step interview process involving the Founder/Artistic Director, leadership team, Board members, and ROCO team.

**ROCO.ORG**