



Director of Philanthropy

ROCO is seeking a high-energy, self-motivated, and creative candidate for the position of Director of Philanthropy. Our ideal person is an entrepreneurial, visionary leader with exceptional relationship building skills who has a proven track record of success in non-profit fundraising.

ROCO is shaping the future of classical music.

We are Houston's deeply local, globally impactful 40-piece professional chamber orchestra with musicians and guest artists from around the globe. Over the past 22 years, ROCO has become one of the most prolific commissioning organizations in the US, reaching 155 world premieres, presented alongside classics and rarely-heard gems. 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. ROCO concerts are multigenerational and multimedia-enhanced experiences, which have been produced in over 75 different venues across Houston. ROCO's debut album, *Visions Take Flight*, was recognized with a GRAMMY® Award for Producer of the Year, Blanton Alspaugh. Alecia Lawyer, ROCO's Founder and Artistic Director, was recently named the 2025 inaugural Texas Classical Musician of the Year.

Every decision at ROCO is viewed through the lens of access, creating a welcoming and inclusive experience for all audience members while reducing barriers that may limit participation. Part of this includes offering Pay-What-You-Wish ticketing for most concerts, as well as free livestreaming and on-demand access to concert recordings, alongside authentic and meaningful audience engagement.

The Director of Philanthropy plays a vital role in ensuring we can sustain and deepen our programming, access, and engagement efforts. Contributed revenue makes up 96% of ROCO's \$2.5 million+ budget, approximately 50% of which comes from individual donors. In collaboration with both the Managing and Artistic Directors, you will develop and execute strategic fundraising plans, with a particular focus on individual donors, while supporting efforts with institutional sources.

ROCO has a human-first approach with a commitment to support, value, and nurture the people we engage, including patrons, musicians, staff, and beyond. Building relationships is core to our mission, and it is one of the most essential roles of the Director of Philanthropy.

What you'll do:

The Director of Philanthropy is responsible for the strategic direction, operations, and delivery of ROCO's multi-level fundraising initiatives. You will be responsible for planning, executing, and achieving both long- and short-term contributed income goals for ROCO through the annual fund, donor consortiums, major gifts, and special events. This role cultivates donor

relationships, identifies new funding opportunities, and diversifies revenue streams to strengthen ROCO's impact.

Who you'll work with:

- Founder & Artistic Director, Alecia Lawyer, is deeply engaged in individual fundraising. She takes great joy in meeting new people and welcoming them into ROCO's fold. You will provide support to Alecia and the new Managing Director by researching these potential prospects and collaborating on individualized strategies, engagement, solicitation, and stewardship of donors.
- Managing Director, Karen Sumner, brings over 20 years of experience in senior level fundraising to her new role at ROCO. The Director of Philanthropy will work with Karen to manage ROCO's institutional fundraising and contract grantwriter, and steward relationships with foundation staff. They will also work together on institutional and individual fundraising strategies as well as identifying new opportunities.
- Operations Manager, Amy Tang, oversees the day-to-day administrative functions of the office and also provides front-line assistance to donors and ticket buyers. Amy supports the development team by processing gifts, managing donor acknowledgments, assisting in the gift renewal process, and coordinating donor event logistics. You and Karen Sumner will co-manage Amy Tang.
- Individual Giving Officer, Rachel Van Buskirk, manages the Annual Fund and develops strategies for mid level giving. She also supports the annual gala, donor events and stewardship activities.

ROCO operates as a team and recognizes how the efforts of one person impact another. You will work in close collaboration with all other members of our 9-person staff, including the marketing, artistic, and programming departments.

You can expect to:

- Serve as a thought partner and the driver of the fundraising strategy for ROCO with the Managing and Artistic Directors and Board.
- Be a part of the Executive ROCO team of Managing Director, Artistic Director, and Marketing Director.
- Design and direct all fundraising activities. Create and implement fundraising plans to achieve both short-term and long-term goals, thereby growing contributed revenue streams.
- Personally cultivate, solicit, and steward new, existing, and lapsed donors at varying levels.
- Develop and pursue targeted strategies to identify new individuals or institutional sources of support, especially by activating supports to open doors to other potential patrons.
- Maximize the use of technology for donor and prospect identification, qualification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.
- Provide oversight for all donor relations (cultivation, stewardship, and solicitation), event planning, and donor communications, including directing the moves management

process for donors to help develop and implement portfolios for the development team.

- Manage the Individual Giving Officer whose role includes:
 - Annual Fund: appeals and campaigns, with carefully coordinated LYBUNT and SYBUNT outreach
 - Lead, manage, and raise money for the annual gala fundraiser. Oversee event logistics and personnel, including staff, volunteers, and vendors. Manage timelines, budgets, and project plans; assist with maintaining accurate event records, invitation lists, and RSVP management.
- Establish and maintain strong relationships with Board members, donors, prospects, and other relevant stakeholder groups.
- Generate and edit content and strategy for fundraising communications, including print collateral, website, and digital media. Supervise and assign all development-related mailings.
- Attend, actively participate in, and play a leadership role at all concerts, public events, private donor and patron events, and board meetings
- In partnership with the Managing and Artistic Directors and Board leadership, identify and recruit members for the Board of Directors
- Work with the Managing Director, track and project the development department's budget, including both expenses and revenue projections

What you'll bring to the team:

Required Qualifications:

- 5+ years of relevant experience in non-profit fundraising/development, and special events coordination
 - Experience in an arts organization is a plus, but not required
 - Experience at a smaller non profit is preferred
- Experience leading organizational development activities, or major areas of a large development department, with multiple contributed revenue streams, including experiences that can fuel a generative approach to new fundraising strategies
- Successful track record in direct fundraising, managing campaigns, communications, and stewardship. Knowledgeable about planned giving, major gift fundraising, and event planning.
- Ability to adapt communications, conversations, and relationships to meet the needs and to build trust with a variety of people both within and outside an organization
- Experience building, managing, and adjusting budgets, with an ease and familiarity with interpreting financial documents
- A demonstrated capacity to mentor and develop other individuals with their development activities at all levels of the organizational chart
- Strong computer skills including, but not limited to:
 - Microsoft and Google programs
 - CRM databases plus prospecting. (experience with Salesforce and/or PatronManager is a plus as well as iWave)

Desired Attributes:

- A high degree of initiative, confidence, and energy to set, pursue, and creatively achieve goals.
- Approach your work with integrity, credibility, and a sense of humor
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills
- Able to build rapport and demonstrate a sincere interest in others; an ability to adapt communications, conversations, and relationships to meet the needs and to build trust with a variety of people both within and outside the organization
- Adaptable to a changing and fast-moving team-driven work environment
- A background in classical music is not required, but a familiarity and interest in the arts is preferred

Hours & Compensation

- Full-time, year-round, exempt employee
- The position is paid on a salary basis, with a range of \$90,000-\$100,000
- Comprehensive health, dental, and vision insurance; life insurance; 401k
- Must be available evenings and weekends to meet the demands of a busy performing arts event schedule
 - ROCO averages 20 – 25 events per year, the concert season typically runs from late September to early May
- Flexible hours and a hybrid work-from-home and in-person schedule
 - In-person is *required* for performances, events, and some meetings
 - In-person is *preferred* at least 4 days per week
- Exceptionally generous paid time off and holidays

ROCO is a vibrant and growing nonprofit with a small staff living within the organization's core values daily. We are committed to building a team that represents a diverse 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.

How to apply

Interested candidates are invited to **submit a letter of interest/cover letter and resume** in confidence to:

jobs@roco.org

Attn: Karen Sumner, Managing Director

Subject Line: ROCO Director of Philanthropy– YOUR NAME

No phone calls, please

NOTE: Applications submitted without a letter of interest/cover letter will *NOT* be considered.